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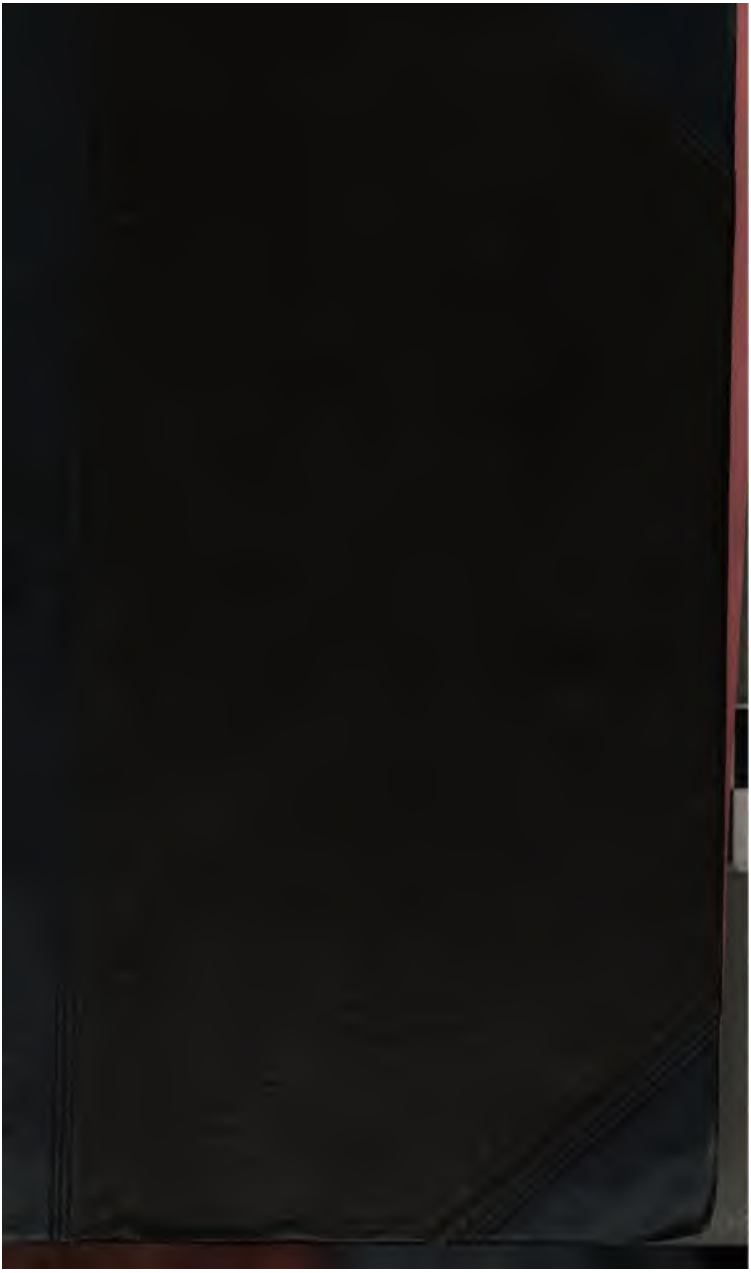

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MANON L'ESCAUT:

OR,

The Fatal Attachment.

A FRENCH STORY.

VOLUME I.

LONDON:

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN the long winter of 1784, *which I paſſed in Normandy, this little Novel fell into my hands. I had then with me ſome Engliſh friends who did not read French; and for their amuſement I tranſlated as I read, the moſt ſtriking paſſages of the ſtory; which appeared to them ſo intereſting that I was induced to tranſlate the whole; or rather to write it anew in Engliſh.*

I do not pretend to have adhered very cloſely to a maxim I have ſomewhere ſeen, that "fidelity is the firſt duty of a tranſlator." I found the ſhort ſentences of the original, if cloſely copied, would be ſo very unpleaſant to an Engliſh ear, that I have throughout lengthened the periods, and have in one or two

two inſtances tranſpoſed a whole page, where I thought I could make the narrative more connected or more clear.

Reflections and exclamations, often trite, and too frequently repeated, I have either altered or entirely omitted; but the clinquant *of the French is ſtill very viſible: tho' perhaps it is more characteriſtical of the manners of the nation where the event happened, than prejudicial to the ſtyle.*

It has been thought, that notwithſtanding all her errors and failings, the picture of Manon is too captivating, and that vice is not drawn in her character as ſufficiently odious. But ſurely an improper tendency cannot be imputed to a ſtory where every deviation from virtue is immediately and ſeverely puniſhed, and which is at length cloſed by a cataſtrophe ſo melancholy as the death of Manon, and the remorſe and deſpair of her lover.

The

The French author or editor ſeems ſo perfectly convinced of the morality of his hiſtory, that he conſiders himſelf as inſtructing while he entertains his readers. His avis au public *is very long: I here tranſlate as much as appears neceſſary, which is as follows:*

Tranſlation of Part of the original Preface.

I am here to deſcribe a young man blinded and intoxicated by a fatal paſſion, who refuſing to be happy, precipitates himſelf into the moſt terrible misfortunes; and who, tho' adorned with the moſt brilliant qualities, prefers the life of an obſcure and wretched wanderer, to all the advantages offered him by nature and fortune. Tho' poſſeſſed of extreme ſenſibility of mind, he violates almoſt every duty; and having ruſhed headlong into an abyſs of ſhame and ſorrow, continues obſtinately

ſtinately to refuſe the aid of that friendly hand which is repeatedly held out to ſave him. In a word, I deſcribe an ambiguous character; a ſtrange compound of virtue and vice, whoſe unworthy actions are a perpetual contradiction to his exalted ſentiments.

Such is the outline of the picture; and perſons of ſenſe will not conſider the repreſentation as uſeleſs. Beſides the pleaſure afforded by an agreeable narrative, there are few of the events that may not ſerve the intereſts of morality: and it appears to be rendering an eſſential ſervice to the reader, at once to inſtruct and amuſe him.

MANON

MANON L'ESCAUT:

A FRENCH STORY.

RETURNING from Rouen, whither ſome law buſineſs in which I acted for my daughter had carried me, I took the road by Evreux, where I reſted the firſt night, and about noon the next day I found myſelf near Paſſy.

On entering that little town, I was ſurpriſed with the appearance of unuſual buſtle among the inhabitants, who were running from their houſes, and gathering in crouds round the gate of a mean inn, where ſtood

two covered waggons; the horſes of which, almoſt exhauſted with fatigue and heat, ſeemed to be but juſt arrived from a long journey. I ſtopped to enquire whence all this buſtle proceeded, but could gain no information: the people, eager to gratify their own curioſity, had not time to attend to mine. They continued preſſing into the inn yard, where I at length ſaw a ſoldier, to whom I beckoned, and on his coming up to me, deſired to know what all this confuſion meant? O nothing Sir, ſaid he; nothing but ten or twelve girls of the town, whom we are carrying to Havre de Grace, from whence they are to be tranſported to America: ſome of them are pretty, which I ſuppoſe excites the attention of theſe people.

I was paſſing on after having received this information; but my attention was further excited by a woman whom I ſaw coming

ing out of the inn, wringing her hands, and bearing on her countenance the impreſſions of horror and pity, whilſt ſhe exclaimed againſt the cruelty of the ſcene ſhe had been witneſs to. What is it then, ſaid I?—Ah! Sir, replied the woman, go in yourſelf, and judge whether ſuch a ſight is not enough to pierce one's heart. I left my horſe; and with difficulty making my way through the croud, I got into the room whither theſe poor creatures were carried, and where I was indeed ſtruck with a moſt affecting ſpectacle.

Among the unfortunate women, who were chained together, ſix in each diviſion, by a chain paſſing round the body, there was one whoſe air and figure ſeemed ſo little to correſpond with the ſituation ſhe was in, that had I ſeen her in any other place I ſhould have concluded her to have been a young woman of the firſt faſhion. Such

was the beauty and elegance of her face and form, that neither the deep depreſſion ſhe appeared to be under, nor the dirt and duſt with which ſhe was cover'd, could conceal it; and ſhe inſpir'd me at once with pity and reſpect. While ſhe turn'd from the gaze of vulgar curioſity as much as her chain would admit, there was in her countenance and attitude ſuch an air of dignity and modeſty, that it was difficult to believe ſhe could ever have deſerv'd the terrible puniſhment under which ſhe was ſuffering; and the expreſſion of grief and terror impreſſed on features, delicate, regular and animated, made her the moſt intereſting figure I had ever ſeen.

The ſix ſoldiers who guarded theſe unhappy victims were in the room. I took aſide the commander of the party, and aſk'd him what he knew of that beautiful young creature? We took her from the hoſpital,

Sir,

Sir, ſaid he, with the others; probably ſhe was not ſent thither for her good deſerts. I have often queſtioned her on the road, but ſhe continues ſilent. However, though I have received no particular orders to favor her, I cannot help treating her rather better than the reſt, as ſhe ſeems to me to be ſomething above them. The young man who ſits there, continued he, pointing to another part of the room, can perhaps give you the information you deſire: he has followed her from Paris, weeping over her the whole way, and muſt certainly be her brother or her lover.

I turned towards the place he had ſhewn me, and beheld, ſitting on the ſeat of a window, a young man who ſeemed loſt in the contemplation of his own miſery. It is impoſſible to conceive a more lively image of deſpair. His dreſs was plain, and even neglected; but the moment I ſaw him I

knew he was a man of faſhion and education. I approached the place where he ſat; he aroſe; and in his figure, his air, his eyes, and the expreſſion of his countenance, there was ſomething at once ſo commanding and inſinuating, that I felt myſelf immediately and involuntarily diſpoſed to love and ſerve him. Do not let my intruſion diſturb you, Sir, ſaid I, ſitting down by him; but will you be ſo good as to ſatisfy a curioſity I cannot repreſs, to know who that very lovely young creature is who ſeems to belong to a rank ſo different from that in which I ſee her? Ah! Sir, replied he, I cannot inform you who ſhe is, without telling you alſo who I am, which very ſtrong reaſons make me wiſh to conceal. One circumſtance, however, you may probably have learned from thoſe fellows, continued he, (pointing to the ſoldiers) which is, that I love her with the moſt violent paſſion, and that her ſituation makes me the moſt miſerable of men. Before ſhe came

came from Paris, I vainly tried every expedient to procure her liberty. Solicitations and addreſs failing, I had recourſe to force; but that has been equally unſucceſsfull; and I am condemned to ſee her dragg'd like a criminal to America. I have only one part to take, which is that of following and embarking with her; which I am determined to do.

But thoſe inhuman wretches, Sir, (meaning the guard) will not ſuffer me now to approach her. My deſign was, (for why ſhould I conceal it) to attack them openly with fire arms, at ſome leagues diſtance from Paris; and I had by a conſiderable ſum of money hired four men to aſſiſt me; but the traitors no ſooner ſaw me engaged, than they went off with my money, and as it would then have been vain to contend with ſix well armed ſoldiers, I gave up my piſtols, and propoſed that they ſhould ſuffer

me to follow the waggons, for which permiſſion I promiſed to pay them handſomely. Tempted by that offer, they allowed me to accompany them; but I ſoon found they would be paid every time they gave me leave to ſpeak to my unfortunate miſtreſs: my purſe was conſequently ſoon exhauſted, and now that I have nothing left, they drive me back with the moſt brutal menaces, whenever I would approach her. Juſt before you came in, I attempted, notwithſtanding their threats, to ſpeak to her, when one of them had the inſolence to drive me back with his bayonet, and on my reproaching him, to level his piece at me. To ſatisfy their avarice, and procure ſuch refreſhment as may enable me to follow her on foot, I ſhall now be obliged to ſell the horſe which brought me thus far.

Tho' he endeavoured to collect himſelf while he gave me this little hiſtory, he could not

not conclude it without tears. I do not preſs you, Sir, ſaid I, to diſcover to me more than you wiſh to have known; but if I can be of any uſe to you I make you a ſincere offer of my ſervices, and beg you will command them. Alas! Sir, replied he, I ſee not the leaſt ray of hope, and I ſubmit to my cruel deſtiny. In America I ſhall at leaſt find myſelf at liberty with the woman I adore. I have written to a friend to ſend me a ſupply of money to Havre: all that diſtreſſes me is how to get thither, and to procure on the road ſuch aſſiſtance and comforts for my dear unhappy girl, as her miſerable ſituation will admit of. Well, ſaid I, ſuffer me then to put an end to your anxiety on that point. Accept this trifle; and be aſſured I lament I can no otherwiſe be of ſervice to you. I put four Louis into his hand, unperceiv'd by the guard, imagining that the knowledge of his having money would only renew their extortion.

I then recollected that poſſibly I might be able, for a trifling conſideration, to bargain with them ſo as that the young lover ſhould have acceſs to his miſtreſs on their way to Havre. I called to the principal and propoſed it to him; and notwithſtanding his aſſurance, he ſeemed aſhamed of his cruelty. It is not, Sir, ſaid he confuſedly, it is not that we refuſe to let the young man ſpeak to the perſon he deſires to be with, but only he wanted to be always near her, which is very inconvenient to us; therefore it is but juſt he ſhould pay us for that inconvenience Well then, ſaid I, let us ſee at how much you value the indulgence? He had the effrontery to aſk me two Louis, which I gave him immediately; aſſuring him at the ſame time that I had given my direction to the young man, who would not fail to inform me if he broke his agreement, or otherwiſe miſbehaved; and that I well knew in that caſe how to have him puniſhed.

The

The lively and expreſſive terms in which the unfortunate ſtranger aſſured me of his gratitude, convinced me he deſerved all I had done for him. As I paſſed out I ſpoke a few words to his miſtreſs, who anſwered me with ſuch an enchanting modeſty, that I left the room deeply reflecting on the extraordinary and incomprehenſible characters of women.

Returning again to my ſolitude, I heard no more of theſe unhappy young people; and near two years having paſſed ſince I met them, the impreſſion they had made on my mind was almoſt effaced, when chance again brought them to my recollection, and furniſhed me with the means of hearing the whole of their diſaſtrous hiſtory.

Landing at Calais, in my way from London, I was detained there by I know not what circumſtance, that day and the following

lowing night. As I paſſed through the ſtreet about noon, I thought I ſaw the ſame young man whom I had met two years before at Paſſy. He had an old portmanteau under his arm, and appeared to be juſt come on ſhore: his dreſs was mean, and he was much paler and thinner than when I firſt ſaw him, but the uncommon elegance of his perſon, and the turn of his countenance, faded as it was, left me no reaſon to doubt he was the ſame. I ſpoke to him: he immediately recollected me, with expreſſions of joy and affection not to be deſcribed.

Ah, my dear Sir! cried he, have I then once more an opportunity of aſſuring you of my eternal gratitude. I enquired from whence he came? By ſea from Havre, replied he, where I lately landed from America. Alaſs! my poor friend, ſaid I, you do not ſeem to have returned in a very fortunate ſituation. Go, continued I, to le Lion

Lion d'Or; I will come to you there presently. I ſoon rejoined him, impatient to have an account of his misfortunes, and of the circumſtances of his voyage, which he now no longer heſitated to give me. You have behaved ſo nobly to me, Sir, ſaid he, that it would be the baſeſt ingratitude to conceal any thing from you. Yes, you ſhall now have at once the hiſtory of my misfortunes, and of the indiſcretions, the ſhameful weakneſs, which has brought theſe misfortunes upon me. While your reaſon obliges you to condemn me, I know, from the goodneſs of your heart, I ſhall ſtill have your pity.

Here then begins the pathetic recital of my young friend's unhappy fortune. I put it upon paper immediately after having heard it; therefore my narrative is exact, tho I am ſenſible it will be much leſs intereſting to thoſe who not having ſeen him can

My high birth, my apparent application, and some exterior advantages which I poſſeſſed, had recommended me to the notice and favor of the principal people of the place.

I had finiſhed my exerciſes with ſo general an approbation, that the Biſhop of the diocels, who was preſent at the exhibition of the College, propoſed to me the eccleſiaſtical line, as a road in which I ſhould riſe to quicker and higher preferment than any I could hope for in the order of Malta, for which my parents deſigned me, and in purſuance of which deſign I already wore the croſs of the order, with the name of the Chevalier des Grieux. The College vacation being come, I prepared to return home; my father intending to ſend me ſoon afterwards to finiſh my education at an Academy at Paris.

I had

I had now fixed the day for my departure from Amiens. Happy had it been for me if I had gone one day ſooner: I ſhould then have avoided the ſight of that dangerous beauty, to my paſſion for whom I owe all the miſeries that have purſued me thro' life, and have plunged me at length into the deepeſt gulph of deſpair.

I regretted nothing in leaving the college but being ſeparated from a friend, with whom, during my ſtay there, I had contracted the cloſeſt intimacy. We had gone thro' a courſe of ſtudies together; but tho' he was ſome years older than myſelf, he was to continue longer at College, becauſe the ſmall fortune he was likely to inherit from his family was not enough to ſupport him in any other profeſſion than that of a churchman, for which he was therefore deſigned: and the acquiſitions

acquiſitions neceſſary for that profeſſion required a longer attendance.

In the courſe of my narrative you will remark that this beloved friend poſſeſſed every good quality that can dignify human nature, with ſo pure and exalted an attachment to me, as ſurpaſſes the moſt celebrated examples of antiquity. If I had followed his advice I had been happy! Or if after my firſt error, I had not ſhut my ears againſt his admonitions, as well as againſt the voice of my own reaſon, I ſhould at leaſt have ſaved ſomething from the wreck of my fortune and my reputation. Alas! in return for his friendſhip I treated him with coldneſs and ingratitude, and flew from him as a troubleſome monitor whoſe advice was an affront to my underſtanding.

On the evening of the day which was to be the laſt of my ſtay at Amiens, I was

was walking through the ſtreet with this friend, whoſe name was Tiberge, when the ſtage coach from Arras drove into the yard of an inn near which we happened to be; we ſauntered in in the idle way of people who have nothing to do, and we ſaw ſeveral women get out of the coach, who went immediately into the houſe; but one remained ſtanding by the coach door, while a man, fifty or ſixty years old, who ſeemed to have the care of her, was taking her baggage out of the boot. This young woman, who could not be more than fifteen, immediately attracted my attention. So uncommon was her beauty, that I, (who had never made any obſervation on beauty till then, and had ſeen the prettieſt women without being at all affected by their charms,) was immediately ſtruck with it to a degree that appeared like the effect of faſcination. That ſobriety and ſteady

conduct

conduct for which I had gained ſo much applauſe, vaniſhed in a moment. The timidity which I had before been remarked for, even to a degree of ridicule, was gone I knew not how. I went up to the lovely creature, who was already miſtreſs of my heart, and aſked her what was the fortunate occaſion of bringing her to Amiens, and what acquaintance ſhe had there? She anſwered me ingenuouſly in a few words, that ſhe was ſent thither by her parents to go into a convent; it being their intention to make her a nun. I was enlightened enough by my infant paſſion to know that this reſolution would be the death of my new formed hopes. I ſpoke to her in a way which gave her ſufficient intimation of my ſentiments. Though ſhe was younger than myſelf, I found her infinitely better informed; and probably it was her early maturity, and her violent inclination for

gaiety

gaiety and pleaſure, that had determined her parents to ſecure her from the conſequences of ſuch propenſities.—Fatal propenſities! which have ruined both her and myſelf.

Entering into diſcourſe with her, I exclaimed againſt the barbarous intentions of her friends, and argued with all the pedantic eloquence I had acquired at college. She affected neither reſerve or diſdain, but told me, ſimply and naturally, that ſhe foreſaw all the unhappineſs ſhe was to ſuffer in a ſtate of life for which ſhe had not the leaſt diſpoſition, but that ſhe muſt ſubmit becauſe it appeared to be the will of Heaven, which had given her no means of avoiding it. The penſive ſoftneſs of her countenance, and the melancholy muſic of her voice, while ſhe pronounced theſe words, or rather the aſcendancy of my evil deſtiny, which had ſeized me to drag me down to my undoing, prevailed ſo far on my

my intoxicated ſenſes, that I was no longer maſter of myſelf. Without reflecting one moment on what I was about to ſay, I aſſured her that if ſhe would rely on my honor, and on the extreme paſſion with which ſhe had inſpired me, I would from that moment dedicate my whole life to her ſervice, deliver her from the tyranny of her relations, and place all my happineſs in procuring her's. I added every thing that I thought likely to induce her to put herſelf inſtantly under my protection. My beautiful unknown was well aware that at my age deceit was little to be apprehended, and ſhe did not heſitate long between the proſpect of affluence and pleaſure I offered her, and the gloom of a convent. She told me that if ſhe ſaw the leaſt probability of my reſcuing her from a fate ſhe abhorred, ſhe could not refuſe to hearken to my profeſſions, and ſhould think herſelf happy

happy to owe to me a liberty which ſhe valued more than life.

I repeated to her that I was ready to undertake every thing: but having no knowledge of the world, nor any idea of the management neceſſary for an intrigue, I continued to run on in the warm expreſſions of love, when her old conductor returned; and our conference was on the point of ending very little to either her ſatisfaction or mine, if the readineſs of her invention had not found a remedy for the ſtupidity with which his unwelcome arrival had ſtruck me. Without being the leaſt diſconcerted, ſhe continued talking to me; and addreſſing me by the name of her couſin, told me that ſince ſhe was fortunate enough to meet me at Amiens, ſhe would delay her entrance into the convent till the next day, that ſhe might have the pleaſure of ſupping with me that evening, in compliance with my invitation. I immediately underſtood

underſtood her, and propoſed to her to lodge that night at an inn in the town, the maſter of which had been my father's coachman, but had long ſince been ſettled at Amiens by his bounty; a man whom I knew to be entirely devoted to my ſervice. I conducted her thither myſelf; while the old ſervant, who ſeemed but little pleaſed with this new acquaintance which his charge had made, followed us with a diſcontented countenance; and my friend Tiberge, who was very much amazed at the whole ſcene, walked by in profound ſilence. He had not heard the ſubject of our diſcourſe, having ſauntered backward and forward in the inn yard during this ſhort converſation, in which I was gone a whole age in love; and I knew too much of his diſpoſition, not to be aware that I could hope for no indulgence from him in the mad project I had undertaken; neither did I believe he would even be a quiet ſpectator. Therefore

fore to get him away I pretended to recollect ſomething I had neglected, which I told him muſt be done before I departed the next morning; and he undertook the commiſſion, though he ſaw my motive for giving it to him.

I then found myſelf at liberty to ſay to my charming miſtreſs all that the moſt unbounded paſſion could dictate; and never perhaps were tranſports greater than mine. My fair unknown told me her name was Mademoiſelle Manon L'Eſcaut. She appeared flattered by the ſucceſs of her charms, and confeſſed that ſhe thought me very aimable, and that ſhe ſhould be happy to give up to me that liberty which but for my attachment muſt have been loſt in the terrors of perpetual confinement. She enquired of what family I was; and being herſelf born in an inferior rank

of life, was not a little elated to hear that the perſon who was become her ſlave was of ſo conſiderable a family.

We now began to conſider what we ſhould do to prevent our being parted; and after various plans, that of immediately eloping ſeemed the only feaſible one. Though the man who attended her was only a ſervant, it required great management either to get him out of the way or eſcape from him: we therefore agreed to have a chaiſe ready before he ſhould be awake in the morning, and go directly to Paris, where we intended to be immediately married. I had about fifty crowns by me; (as my father gave me a very handſome allowance, which, having few expences, I never exceeded) my miſtreſs had about double that ſum, to pay the charges of her initiation into the Convent; and we thought, like two children

children as we were, that an hundred and fifty crowns were an inexhauſtible ſum: and we depended as much on a ſupport after our elopement, as we did that our ſcheme to get away would ſucceed. Having ſupped with my charming Manon, with a degree of gaiety and ſatisfaction I had never before felt, I went home to prepare for the morning.

My arrangements were the more eaſily made, becauſe having before deſigned to quit Amiens the next day, my baggage was already packed up, and I found no difficulty in getting it carried to the inn, nor in ſecuring a chaiſe to be ready at five o'clock in the morning, which was as ſoon as the gates of the town were opened. But I had yet an obſtacle to ſurmount to which I had not ſufficiently attended, but which had nearly rendered my whole deſign abortive.

My friend Tiberge, though only three years older than myſelf, was of the moſt regulated conduct and ſtricteſt morals; and his warm attachment to me made him very quick ſighted in whatever related to me.

The converſation I had held with ſo beautiful a girl as Manon, and my officiouſly conducting her to another inn, as well as the fineſſe by which I had contrived to diſmiſs him from the party, had given him ſufficient reaſon to ſuſpect me; but unwilling to offend me, he would not return to the place where he had left us together, but waited for me at my lodgings, where I found him on my return.

I was out of humour when I ſaw him, which he eaſily perceived; for I found it impoſſible to conceal the conſtraint his preſence laid me under. "I am ſure, my dear

dear Des Grieux," ſaid he, " that you are engaged in ſome purſuit which you wiſh to conceal from me. I ſee it plainly by your manner." I anſwered him with ſome tartneſs, that I did not conceive myſelf obliged to give him an account of my actions. " No," returned he, " you certainly are not; but you call me your friend, and ſurely as ſuch I am entitled to ſome degree of confidence." In ſhort, he preſſed me ſo warmly, that I, who had never concealed from him any emotion of my heart, found myſelf unable to refuſe him the ſecret it now laboured with: I declared to him the violence of my paſſion, and owned the wild project I had determined on to poſſeſs myſelf of the object of it.

But hardly had this unguarded detail concluded, before I repented of having made it. Tiberge was too ſincerely my friend to hear of ſuch a ſcheme with tem-

per; and he received my confeſſion with an air ſo cold, and a countenance ſo diſcontented, that I immediately trembled for the ſucceſs of my undertaking; and not without reaſon, when he told me that he was determined to oppoſe it to the utmoſt of his power. He repreſented to me in ſtrong terms all the folly of what I was about to do; and concluded by proteſting that if I ſtill perſiſted in hazarding ſo ruinous and diſgraceful a meaſure, he would inform thoſe of my deſigns who had more power than he poſſeſſed, effectually to prevent me.

I was half diſtracted that I had ſo indiſcretely betrayed myſelf, well convinced that (what I then thought) his ridiculous prudence would entirely defeat all my well-concerted plans, and ſeparate me for ever from Manon. However I began to recollect that in this ill-timed confidence I had

not

not told him that I meant to go off the very next morning; and I determined to deceive him by an equivocation. "Tiberge," cried I, "I always thought you my friend, and by your preſent conduct you ſhew yourſelf truly ſo. I meant only to hear what you would ſay to my project: as to executing it directly it is not what I have reſolved upon. It is true I am diſtractedly in love with this girl, and find it impoſſible to live without her; but I ſhall not be ſo raſh as I have made you ſuppoſe. Nevertheleſs as I cannot flatter you with any hopes of curing me of a paſſion which is at this time a part of my exiſtence, I ſhall certainly continue to ſee her as long and as often as in my power.

For this reaſon I ſhall delay my return home for a few days. Come to me tomorrow morning: I will carry you with me to ſee her: and when you have con-

verſed with her, you ſhall own that her charms are ſuch as ſhall juſtify all I can do for her. Tiberge ſeeing me rather more reaſonable, and believing me incapable of deceit, became better ſatisfied and left me, not without renewing his good advice.

He was no ſooner gone, than I ſet about ſuch preparations as I had yet to make, in which I paſſed the remainder of the night; and at the firſt dawn of morning I flew to the inn, where Manon expected me. She was already dreſſed, and waiting at the window which looked into the ſtreet, where ſhe no ſooner perceived me than ſhe deſcended in ſilence to the door, which ſhe opened herſelf, and giving me a ſmall bundle, which contained all the linen ſhe would take, we left the inn as expeditiouſly as poſſible, and found the chaiſe waiting at the appointed place.

place. I put Manon into it, and mounting a poſt horſe myſelf, we went off with ſuch expedition that we were ſoon at a great diſtance from Amiens.

The conduct of my friend Tiberge, when he found how I had deceived him, you will know hereafter: you will hear with ſurprize the exceſs of his zeal and attachment; and you will feel how unpardonable my conduct muſt have been, and how much I muſt now ſuffer in reflecting that I have requited ſuch generoſity only with the blackeſt ingratitude.

We travelled ſo faſt that we reached St. Dennis before the evening cloſed; indeed we had allowed ourſelves at the different ſtages no longer time than ſufficed to change horſes, and had therefore had neither converſation nor refreſh-

ment: but now, 'as we ſaw ourſelves ſo near Paris, and out of danger from purſuit, we determined to ſtop for ſome hours. So unguarded was our behaviour, that our hoſt and poſtillions could not but remark it; and added to our extreme youth, and the haſte we appeared to be in, it gave them ſufficient cauſe to ſuſpect the nature of our connection and adventures.

Though our project of being married was now forgotten, certain it is, that naturally tender and conſtant as I was, I ſhould have been happy my whole life with Manon had ſhe been but faithful. The ſweetneſs of her temper, the ſoftneſs of her heart, and the vivacity of her humour, added to the uncommon attractions of her perſon, gave her every hour an encreaſed aſcendancy over me. My attachment was ſo ſtrong, that I ſhould have

have continued for ever in voluntary ſlavery, the happieſt of mankind. Perverſe and fatal deſtiny! Thoſe very qualities of my temper, tenderneſs and conſtancy, which would have ſecured the happineſs of any other man, have rendered me the moſt miſerable being on earth.

On our arrival at Paris, we took a ready furniſhed lodging in la rue de V—, which moſt unhappily for me was at that time inhabited by Monſieur de Beaumanoir, a celebrated Farmer General. Three weeks paſſed away, in which I was ſo entirely engroſſed by my paſſion that I thought of nothing elſe; but the natural turn of my temper, and the quiet way in which we lived, without company or diſſipation, brought back to my alienated mind the idea of my family, and of the pain my father muſt feel from my

abſence and the uncertainty of what was become of me.

I determined immediately to make advances towards a reconciliation with him; and even flattered myſelf that if I could prevail on him once to ſee Manon, he would be ſo captivated with the beauty of her perſon, and her ſeducing manners, that I could eaſily perſuade him of what I myſelf firmly believed, that her heart and underſtanding were equal to the graces of her form; in which caſe I was ſure that her being without fortune, or of an obſcure family, would not prevent his conſenting to my marrying her: and to marry her was ſtill my intention, though I was now convinced I could not do it for many years to come if my father oppoſed it.*

* In France a man cannot marry without the conſent of his parents, till he is 30; and a woman, till ſhe is 25 years old.

I com-

I communicated my reflections to Manon; and told her, that beſides motives of love towards her, and duty to my father, which influenced me, I had yet another which ought to be of ſome weight, and that was neceſſity; for our finances were by this time ſo very much reduced, that I was entirely cured of believing them inexhauſtible. Manon heard this diſcourſe with a coldneſs that quite diſconcerted me. She repreſented to me the hazard I ran of being forced away by my father as ſoon as he knew where I was concealed; and ſpoke tenderly of the pain ſhe ſhould then feel in being ſeparated from me. As to the plea of neceſſity, ſhe anſwered that we had yet enough to ſupport us ſome weeks, and that when our preſent money was gone, ſhe doubted not but that ſhe ſhould find reſources in the kindneſs of ſome of her relations in the country, who ſhe was

ſure

ſure would ſupply her as ſoon as ſhe applied to them. To theſe objections, as they ſeemed to ariſe from her affection for me, and her fears of loſing me, I eaſily yielded, and gave up for the preſent all thoughts of writing to my father.

This little difference of opinion ſhe ſoftened by ſo many bewitching marks of tenderneſs and attachment, that I, who abſolutely adored her, gave myſelf up implicitly to her will, and believed that whatever ſhe adviſed was right. Intoxicated as I was with my extravagant paſſion, I dreamed not of the bitter return that was even now preparing for me! Manon had hitherto been my banker, and had entirely managed our little expences; nor had I found any reaſon to ſuſpect her prudence, till a few days after the converſation I have juſt related, I remarked that our table

was

was better ſupplied than uſual, and that Manon had added to her dreſs ſeveral articles of a price and quality much higher than ſhe had before poſſeſſed. As I knew the money remaining in her hands could not exceed twelve or fourteen piſtoles, I could not help expreſſing my ſurpriſe at what I ſaw: but Manon anſwered that I need be in no pain on that account. "Did I not tell you," ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, "that I ſhould find reſources?" I loved and truſted her with ſuch ſimple faith that I was not eaſily alarmed. I believed ſhe might really have received ſome aſſiſtance from her relations, and was for that time content.

But a few days afterwards I went out after dinner, having told her I ſhould be abſent all the evening. Not however finding thoſe at home with whom I meant to

to have paſſed it, I returned to my lodgings almoſt immediately, and was ſurpriſed, on rapping at the door, that I was made to wait ſeveral minutes. Our only ſervant was a girl of ſixteen or ſeventeen years old: when at length ſhe came to the door, I aſked her why ſhe had kept me there ſo long? She anſwered, in apparent confuſion, that ſhe had not heard me. It happened that I had rapped only once; I naturally therefore aſked her, why if ſhe had not heard me ſhe had opened the door at all? This queſtion ſo totally diſconcerted her, that having no preſence of mind to form another excuſe, ſhe burſt into tears, aſſuring me that it was not her fault, but that her miſtreſs had forbidden her opening the door till ſhe ſhould have given Monſieur de Beaumanoir time to go away by the other ſtaircaſe which had a communication with her apartment.

At

At this explanation, which I received as I was going up ſtairs, I became like a ſtatue. The ſurprize I was under was ſuch, that not knowing what I did, I came down ſtairs again, and pretending to have forgotten ſomething, went haſtily out of the houſe, bidding the girl tell her miſtreſs that I ſhould be back directly, but by no means to mention that ſhe had told me of her having been viſited by Monſieur de Beaumanoir.

The conſternation and diſtraction of my mind deprived me for ſome moments of my faculties. I walked along, breathleſs and ſtupid, till I came to a coffee houſe, into which I entered; and ſitting down by a table, I threw my arms on it, and laid down my head, trying to develope ſentiments of rage, jealouſy and madneſs, till then unfelt. Hardly dared I repeat to myſelf the words I had heard, and

and could ſcarce perſuade myſelf but that the whole was an illuſion. Sometimes I determined to return home, and to take no notice of what I had heard. So impoſſible did it appear that Manon could be faithleſs, that even to ſuppoſe it a moment ſeemed a crime. Surely, thought I, the ſentiments of my own boſom are not better known to me than thoſe of Manon. Can that ſoft temper, that ingenuous countenance, conceal a perfidious and cruel heart? No! it is impoſſible! Manon cannot be ſo abandoned!

Still however this viſit of Monſieur de Beaumanoir was a circumſtance not to be got over: and then the acquiſitions Manon had lately made of dreſs and ornaments darted acroſs my brain, and ſeemed to confirm the dreadful idea of a newer and a richer lover. The reliance too ſhe ſeemed to have on finding reſources for our-

our ſupport; from whence could it ariſe but from having ſecured to herſelf ſome powerful protector? On the other hand, I had hardly been abſent from her ten minutes ſince our arrival at Paris: what opportunity therefore could Manon have had to liſten to the addreſſes of any other man? At length I perſuaded myſelf that I had diſcovered the reaſon of this myſterious conduct. Monſieur de Beaumanoir, ſaid I, is a man of great buſineſs and connections: probably the relations of Manon may thro' his hands have remitted her part of the money ſhe hoped to receive from them; and to-day he may have brought her another ſupply, which ſhe has concealed from me to have the pleaſure of ſurpriſing me agreeably. Doubtleſs ſhe would have told me of it, if inſtead of coming hither to torment myſelf I had queſtioned her about it; and I am ſure that

that when I aſk her ſhe will conceal from me nothing that I wiſh to know.

I argued myſelf at length into a belief that this was the truth. The agitation of my ſpirits ſubſided. I returned to my lodgings, and endeavoured to meet Manon as uſual. She received me alſo with an air of pleaſure and affection, and I was tempted inſtantly to diſcover to her my late uneaſineſs, and its ſource; but I refrained, ſtill flattering myſelf ſhe would lead to the converſation. In that hope I ſat down to ſupper with as much chearfulneſs as I could aſſume; but when candles were brought I thought I ſaw the traces of tears on the cheeks of Manon, and that an expreſſion of inquietude ſat on her countenance. I obſerved that ſhe turned her eyes on me with a look rather of pity and regret, than of the warm ſentiments they were generally animated with.

with. My eyes, while I made theſe remarks, were alſo fixed on her's with a look of melancholy anxiety. We neither of us eat, but continued for ſome moments gazing at each other in mournful ſilence. At length I ſaw her beautiful eyes fill with tears, which ſtreamed down her cheeks into her boſom. Perfidious tears! which ſhe could not help ſhedding over the victim ſhe was about to ſacrifice.

Manon! cried I, in the utmoſt emotion, my dear Manon! what is all this? O my God! what can be the matter! from whence theſe tears? You weep! and the occaſion of your ſorrow is unknown to me. She anſwered me only by deep drawn ſighs and a new flood of tears, which alarmed me almoſt to diſtraction. I aroſe, and throwing my arms round her, I conjured her by all our love, and if ſhe would preſerve my ſenſes,

to

to tell me inſtantly what had afflicted her? I caught the infection, and ſhed tears myſelf while I kiſſed her's from her cheeks as they fell. The moſt ſavage heart muſt ſurely have been moved by theſe warm and artleſs expreſſions of love. Of love even to agony, which the ſight of her grief threw me into.

While I was thus wholly occupied by my fear on her account, and conjuring her to explain the cauſe of her concern, I heard the ſteps of ſeveral perſons on the ſtairs: they tapped gently at the door; and Manon having kiſſed me, while tears ſeemed to choak her utterance, tore herſelf away from me and ran haſtily into her dreſſing room, the door of which ſhe immediately locked within ſide. I imputed this to her diſlike of being ſeen by any one, diſordered and in tears. I advanced to the door to ſee who it was that thus intruded on us; but

but I had no ſooner opened it than I found myſelf ſeized by three men, whom I inſtantly recollected were my father's ſervants. Two of them held my arms while a third ſearched my pockets, and took from thence a knife, the only offenſive inſtrument of any kind that I had about me. They deſired me to forgive them for treating me ſo rudely, but aſſured me it was by my father's poſitive orders, and that my eldeſt brother waited for me at the door in a coach.

Bewildered and confounded at this ſtrange ſcene, and incapable of reſiſtance, I ſuffered myſelf to be conducted to him. They put me into the coach where my brother ſat, who embraced but did not ſpeak to me; and the coachman having already received his orders, drove us very faſt towards St. Dennis. As we both continued ſilent, I had leiſure to reflect on

on what had befallen me. When I recollected the tranſactions of the day, they appeared ſo inexplicable that I was loſt in conjectures; yet none that I could make ſeemed to throw any light on the myſtery that ſurrounded me. I was cruelly betrayed, but by whom I knew not. Tiberge firſt occurred to me. Ah, traitor! muttered I to myſelf, I will be ſeverely revenged! Thy life ſhall anſwer thy officiouſneſs, if it is thee! But then I remembered that the place of my abode was wholly unknown to him, and therefore it was impoſſible he could have given my father intelligence of me. Could I ſuſpect Manon? my heart revolted at the idea: yet the unuſual melancholy which ſeemed to overwhelm her, her tears, and the kiſs ſhe had given me at parting, appeared very enigmatical. But ſtill I felt diſpoſed to believe that all her diſtreſs aroſe from a ſort of preſentiment of our approaching

approaching misfortune: ſo willing was I to deceive myſelf, and ſo impoſſible did I find it to believe that Manon would betray me. The reſult therefore of my conjecture was, that I had been ſeen by ſome perſons who knew me in the ſtreets of Paris, who had watched me home, and informed my father where I was concealed. This idea ſeemed conſoling, and the perturbation of my mind began to ſubſide. I concluded I ſhould ſuffer ſome ſevere reproaches, and perhaps harſh treatment, from my father, which I determined to bear patiently; to promiſe whatever he deſired, and to eſcape as ſoon as poſſible to Paris, to reſtore life and happineſs to my beloved Manon.

We ſoon arrived at St. Dennis. My brother, ſurprized at the ſilence I obſerved, and imagining it aroſe from the apprehenſions I was under at meeting

my father, undertook to re-aſſure me. He told me I had nothing to fear from my father's reſentment, if I would determine to enter quietly into my uſual courſe of life, and return to the duty I had ſo groſsly violated. We paſſed the night at St. Dennis; and my brother had the precaution to make two of the ſervants ſleep in the room with me, while another remained centinel. When I entered the inn, I perceived it to be that where Manon and I ſtopped on our way to Paris: a circumſtance I now remembered with the moſt painful regret. The maſter of the inn and his ſervants recollected me; and ſeeing my preſent ſituation, eaſily gueſſed at what had befallen me. To avoid their remarks, I haſtened to my room as ſoon as we got out of the coach; and at day break the next day we ſet out in my father's poſt chaiſe, which was there waiting

ing for us, and arrived at home on the evening of the following day.

My brother went to my father firſt, in the deſign of ſpeaking in my favor, by informing him of the docility with which I ſubmitted to his orders; ſo that when I was admitted to his preſence he received me with leſs ſeverity than I expected. He contented himſelf with making me ſome general reproaches for the fault I had committed, by abſenting myſelf without his leave; and as to my miſtreſs, he told me I thoroughly deſerved what had happened to me, for my ſilly credulity. He ſaid he had once a better opinion of my underſtanding; but hoped this adventure would teach me more prudence. I underſtood this diſcourſe only according to my own ideas; and by no means as reflecting on the fidelity of Manon. I thanked my father for his

lenity, promiſed every thing he expected of me, and triumphed in my own heart at the deceit I meditated.

I had not the leaſt doubt, but that unſuſpected as I was of any farther deſign, I ſhould be left at liberty, and ſhould be able to eſcape from the houſe before the next morning. When we ſat down to ſupper, my father and my brother rallied me on my elopement, and the faith and attachment of my miſtreſs: I took it in good part, and was even pleaſed to find that I was permitted to ſpeak of her who occupied all my thoughts. But at length ſome expreſſions that dropped from my father, as it were by accident, attracted my attention. He mentioned *intereſted* ſervices done by Monſieur de Beaumanoir. I was confuſed and ſhocked at that name, and ſubmiſſively deſired an explanation of my father. He turned towards my brother,

ther, and enquired of him if he had not related the whole to me? My brother anſwered, that I had appeared ſo tranquil and reaſonable during the journey, that he did not believe I had occaſion for ſuch a remedy to cure me of my folly. I obſerved that my father then heſitated whether he ſhould explain himſelf: but I intreated him with ſo much earneſtneſs, that he determined to ſatisfy me; or rather to aſſaſſinate me by the moſt cruel of all recitals.

He aſked me if I had really been ſo ſimple as to believe that I had poſſeſſed the heart of Manon. I anſwered boldly that I was ſo ſure of it, that nothing in the world could induce me to doubt it a moment. My father broke into a loud laugh at the ſolemnity of my manner, and the aſſurance I ſeemed to have. Excellent! cried he; excellent! Truly, my

poor Chevalier, it is pity thou ſhouldeſt be deſigned for the order of Malta, ſince thou art ſo well diſpoſed by nature to become that commodious animal, a patient huſband. He added a thouſand other railleries of the ſame kind, while I remained ſilent, with a beating heart. At length he continued to tell me, that according to a calculation he had made, from the time of my departure from Amiens, Manon had loved me about twelve days; for, continued he, I know you went from thence on the twenty-eighth of laſt month, this is the twenty-ninth of the preſent; it is eleven days ſince Monſieur de Beaumanoir wrote to me; I ſuppoſe he might be ſeven or eight in forming a connection with your Princeſs: deduct therefore eight and eleven from the thirty one days you have lived together, and ſhe may poſſibly have been conſtant about twelve; one or two more or leſs either

either way. Upon this the laughter was renewed againſt me with greater violence than before.

You find, Chevalier, added my father, that Monſieur de Beaumanoir is now in poſſeſſion of your divinity, and removed you to obtain it. For as to profeſſions of diſintereſted friendſhip from a man I never ſaw, I have ſeen too much of the world to believe them; nor is De Beaumanoir a likely man to do an act of kindneſs merely from principle. The fact was, that Mademoiſelle informed him who you were; and as you were an obſtacle in their way, they concerted together the means of removing you out of it; which they knew would be effected by informing me where I might find you, and then oblige you to return home. You may however glory in the length of your triumph, conſidering the excellent ſubject

you met with. "You conquer rapidly, Chevalier, but you have not yet learned to ſecure your conqueſt."

I was no longer able to liſten to a diſcourſe, every word of which was a dagger to my ſoul. I aroſe; but had made only a ſtep or two from the table, before I fell on the floor, and for ſome minutes loſt all recollection in total inſenſibility.

Immediate aſſiſtance brought me to myſelf: but I opened my eyes only to ſhed a torrent of tears, and my lips only to complain in terms dictated by the bittereſt deſpair. My father, who always tenderly loved me, was affected by the agony I was in, and employed every argument to conſole me. I liſtened to him, but underſtood not what he ſaid; and inſtead of the compoſure he recommended, I threw myſelf at his feet, imploring him to

to let me inſtantly return to Paris, that I might ſtab De Beaumanoir to the heart. No! cried I, diſtractedly, he has not, he cannot be poſſeſſed of Manon's love! He has ſeduced her by philtres, by ſorcery, or perhaps by means yet more deteſtable. He has perhaps threatened her with death or impriſonment, to oblige her to abandon me. Her heart is mine; has always been mine. But ſhe is too charming; and that villain has gained an aſcendancy over her by the moſt wicked and unwarrantable arts. Oh, my God! can I believe it is in the nature of Manon to betray me and to love another? Do I not know her incapable of ſuch cruelty and ſuch ingratitude?

Amidſt this incoherent raving, I repeated every moment my determination to go back to Paris; and my father ſaw there was nothing too deſperate for me to under-

take in the ſituation my mind was then in. He therefore conducted me himſelf into an attic chamber, where he left me with two ſervants, who were directed to keep me conſtantly in ſight. I knew not what I did or ſaid. I would have given a thouſand lives to have been only one quarter of an hour at Paris: but in the wildneſs of my frenzy I had ſo openly declared my intention of going thither, that I ſoon underſtood I was now prohibited from leaving my chamber. I meaſured, in gloomy ſilence, the height of my window from the ground, and found all eſcape by that means impoſſible. I then addreſſed myſelf to the two ſervants, and by every promiſe I thought likely to tempt them, endeavoured to prevail on them to conſent to my eſcape: but their fidelity was not to be ſhaken; and in the madneſs of deſpair I attacked them with menaces yet more impotent.

Finding

Finding every effort fruitleſs, my rage turned on myſelf. I determined to die. But as all means of deſtroying myſelf were carefully kept from me, and the ſervants were conſtantly in the room, I could only throw myſelf on my bed, reſolute to refuſe every kind of nouriſhment, and to riſe from it no more. I paſſed the night without ſleep, and the two following days without food. My father, alarmed at my obſtinacy, came up to me on the evening of the ſecond. He ſoothed me, and ſpoke to me in a manner ſo affectionate, that he reſtored to me the power of ſhedding tears, of which the violence of my ſorrow had deprived me. Having at length brought me to liſten to him, he abſolutely commanded me to eat what he had directed to be brought to me, which with difficulty I obeyed; and for many days I took nothing but by his abſolute command, and to avoid diſobeying his peremptory orders.

But

But his tender attention, and the trouble he took to bring me to reaſon, by degrees affected me. I began to be aſhamed of the ungrateful return I made to ſo much paternal goodneſs; and to hear him at leaſt with patience when he endeavoured to cure me of my unworthy attachment, by inſpiring me with contempt for Manon. Indeed it was impoſſible that I could eſteem her as I had done; fickle, mercenary, ungrateful and perfidious. But Manon, ſuch as I once thought her, was ever preſent to my imagination. Her lovely form was ſtill before my eyes, and her enchanting voice continually vibrated in my ears. All theſe charms were I knew in the poſſeſſion of another—of my worthleſs rival! But that reflection only added to my regret and my torment, without curing me of my paſſion; which in the bottom of my heart burnt with as much violence as ever. I can die, my father! ſaid

ſaid I; I even ought to die, after the ſhame I have ſuſtained, and the grief that tears me to pieces. I can die!——but I cannot forget Manon!

My father was aſtoniſhed at my conduct; becauſe knowing the principles of honor in which I had been brought up, he thought every ſentiment of my heart muſt revolt at the treaſon and duplicity of my miſtreſs: but ſeeing me ſtill ſo devoted to her, he imagined my attachment was leſs to her in particular than to the ſex in general. Perſuading himſelf ſtrongly of this, and conſulting only his affection for me, he determined to ſacrifice his own views rather than thwart my inclinations, where they could be properly indulged. My dear Chevalier, ſaid he, it has hitherto been my intention, you know, to put you into the order of Malta; but I fancy your

wiſhes

wiſhes have taken another turn: You are fond of pretty women; I will therefore look out for one who ſhall pleaſe you. We will marry you, Chevalier, and you ſhall live with us: tell me what you think of the propoſal?

I aſſured him that after the cruel experience I had had, all women were equally indifferent to me; or rather, that I deteſted them all. Come, come, ſaid my father, ſmiling, we will find one who in perſon ſhall be as like your Manon as poſſible; and who, with as many charms of face and figure, ſhall have an unblemiſhed mind.

I eagerly caught his hand. Oh, my father! cried I, it is Manon! Manon herſelf you muſt reſtore to me! Ah! it is not ſhe who has betrayed and deceived me! ſhe is incapable of deceit! 'Tis De Beau-

Beaumanoir; that deteſted monſter! who has deceived her, you, and me. If you had ever ſeen her; if you knew how tender, how ſincere, how charming ſhe is; you would admire her, you would love her, and know how to pity and excuſe the anguiſh I feel at being ſeparated from ſo many perfections!

You behave like a child, ſaid my father. How can you ſo obſtinately ſhut your eyes againſt conviction after all you have heard? have I not told you that by her contrivance and appointment you were given up to your brother? You ſhould forget that ſuch a perſon exiſts, and profit by what has befallen you, as well as by my undeſerved indulgence.

I felt that my father was right; but it was an involuntary emotion that thus made me ſpeak in favor of my faithleſs miſtreſs.

Virgil which had formerly been obſcure to me. I amuſed myſelf with making an amorous commentary on the fourth book of the Eneid. Alas! cried I, as I wrote it, Eneas ſhould have poſſeſſed an heart like mine, to have taſted and to have returned as he ought the paſſion of the tender Dido.

In this ſtate of mind I was one day agreeably ſurprized by a viſit from my friend Tiberge; of whom I had hitherto thought merely as a ſchool friend, whom a ſimilarity of ſtudies and tempers had endeared to me for the time; but I had no particular reaſon to believe his attachment had taken a much deeper root than is uſual among college acquaintance. I now found him ſo much improved, ſo formed in his perſon, ſo regulated in his manner, and with an air of ſuch dignity and underſtanding, that he inſpired me with

with ſomething like veneration. He ſpoke to me rather as an experienced monitor than as a young man but little older than myſelf; and while he lamented the error I had fallen into, congratulated me on the advanced progreſs of my cure, and exhorted me to make uſe of experience ſo dearly bought, in the conduct of my future life.

I liſtened to this diſcourſe from ſo young a man with aſtoniſhment. My friend! continued he, what I ſay to you, though it appears in an unuſual ſtile for a man of my age, is not the leſs true; of which I am perfectly convinced. My inclination for pleaſure is naturally as ſtrong as your's; but happily for me, my courſe of ſtudies, and a mind over which reaſon has yet a ſtronger influence, has enabled me to compare the effects of indulging myſelf in diſſipation, or adhering to ſtrict rectitude

titude of morals; and I have been long ſo well perſuaded of the advantage of the latter, that I have determined to conquer my propenſities to the follies of the world; and I have already ſo far learned to deſpiſe them, that I ſhould before now have quitted it for ever, if my regard for you had not with-held me. The hope of being uſeful to you, has kept me from leaving a ſcene for which I have no longer any reliſh, and devoting myſelf wholly to a cloiſter. My dear Charles, I know the excellence of your heart, and the ſoundneſs of your underſtanding; and I am convinced there is nothing great and good of which you are not capable. The illuſive charms of pleaſure have miſled you from the paths of honor; but it is ſtill to be regained with more reputation than if you had never quitted it: and you will regain it, I am ſure you will.

He

He then told me my elopement from Amiens had given him ſuch extreme concern that he had taſted no ſatisfaction afterwards. As ſoon as I found, ſaid he, that you had deceived me, and was gone off with your miſtreſs, I determined to follow you, which I did on horſeback, with as much expedition as poſſible; but you had four or five hours the advantage of me, ſo that I had little chance of overtaking you. I traced you however as far as St. Dennis, and then being certain you would ſhelter yourſelves among the crouds of Paris, I went on thither, and for ſix weeks never ceaſed making every enquiry in my power, but without effect. At length, being one evening at the Italian Comedy, I thought I ſaw your miſtreſs, though her appearance was ſo different from that ſhe wore when I ſaw her with you at Amiens, that I almoſt doubted her being the ſame perſon.

perſon. Her dreſs was in the higheſt ſtile of faſhion, and ſhe glittered with innumerable jewels. You however met not with her, and from the opinion I had already formed of her, I imputed all this magnificence to the liberality of a new lover.

Unwilling to ſpeak to her in public, I followed her coach till it ſet her down at the door of an elegant houſe, where, on enquiry, I learned that ſhe was ſupported in this ſplendid ſituation by De Beaumanoir, the Farmer General. The following day I went back to her houſe, and was admitted to ſpeak with her; but no ſooner did I mention your name, and begin an enquiry after you, than ſhe turned haſtily from me, and left me with evident ſymptoms of diſpleaſure and confuſion. Nor could I afterwards gain any intelligence of you, but was obliged to return into the country

country unſatisfied. There however I learned your ſeparation from her, and the diſorder of mind into which it had thrown you: and I did not reſolve to come to you, 'till I thought the tumult of your ſpirits had ſubſided; hoping that then returning reaſon, aſſiſted by my arguments, might reſtore you to tranquility, to your family, and yourſelf.

You have ſeen Manon then? ſaid I:—Happy fellow! and I—am condemned to ſee her no more! This mark of remaining weakneſs drew from Tiberge reproaches which I deſerved but too much. Gradually however the aſcendancy he once had over my mind reaſſumed its force. His friendſhip was ſo nobly diſintereſted, he knew ſo well how to flatter my abilities, and to mingle praiſe and pity with advice and reproaches, that my inclinations again aroſe to embrace the life I had formerly

formerly been diſpoſed to, and to devote myſelf to the church with Tiberge. Alas! the impoſſibility of living for Manon had really more influence with me than the dictates of devotion, which I did not feel: and a world, in which I muſt be for ever ſeparated from her, was to me a world of inſipidity and diſguſt.

My reſolution however to take the tonſure became, as I then thought, every day more ſtrongly confirmed. I remembered that in this line the biſhop of Amiens had prognoſticated for me honors and preferment: and ſo effectually was my imagination impoſed upon by my preſent ſentiments, that I believed I could really renounce every thing but the holy purſuits of religion. The deep impreſſions of piety which my mind had received in the early part of my life, now ſeemed to be renewed with their priſtine force. Occupied

pied by theſe ideas, I made in my day dreams a little arrangement of my future life, of which this ſyſtem of piety and tranquility formed the ground work: I imagined a little ſolitary houſe, ſheltered by a wood, and a clear rivulet running at the bottom of my garden; a library of well choſen books, a neat frugal table ſurrounded occaſionally with a few virtuous and ſenſible friends, and a correſpondence with one of knowledge and erudition at Paris, who ſhould inform me of all the events of conſequence that might paſs there, leſs from any ſatisfaction I ſhould have in hearing them, than to give me an higher reliſh for my retirement, in contemplating at a diſtance the vain and ridiculous purſuits of mankind. Having ſketched out this unclouded landſcape in my imagination, I have ſometimes ſaid to myſelf, well, ſurely in ſuch a ſpot, and ſo ſurrounded

by rational enjoyments, I ſhall poſſeſs every thing that is worthy the wiſh of a reaſonable being. Alas! the aſſertion was no ſooner made than my treacherous heart denied it—ſecretly whiſpered that the principal figure in ſuch a picture was ſtill wanting; and that even in the loveliest ſolitude, a frightful void would remain in my boſom, which could be filled only by Manon.

Tiberge, whoſe viſits now became frequent, obtained of my father a greater degree of liberty for me, and took upon himſelf the completion of my cure. He encouraged that inclination for the eccleſiaſtical ſtate with which he had firſt inſpired me; and while my reſolutions were yet warm, we mentioned my deſign to my father, who anſwered, that it had always been his determination to leave his children as much at liberty as prudence would allow,

in

in the choice of their profeſſions; and that in whatever manner I choſe to diſpoſe of myſelf, conſiſtently with honor, he would reſerve to himſelf no other right than that of giving me advice. In regard to the preſent propoſal, his only wiſh was, that I would conſider well what I was about, and not raſhly enter into engagements which could never be recalled, ſince the vows taken by the clergy were irrevocable.

I believed my reſolutions unalterable; and as the ſeaſon was now returning when the Colleges meet, it was ſettled between Tiberge and me that we ſhould put ourſelves together into the ſeminary of St. Sulpice; where he was to finiſh his theological ſtudies, and I was to begin mine. Before we ſet out he was fortunate enough to obtain a conſiderable benefice from the biſhop of the dioceſe, to whom

his merit had recommended him. My father, believing me long ſince cured of my attachment to Manon, and relying on the attention which he knew Tiberge would exert to ſave me from any new error, made no objection to my going to Paris; where, on our arrival, I reſigned the croſs of Malta for the clerical habit, and loſt the title of Chevalier in that of the Abbé des Grieux.

I applied myſelf to ſtudy ſo intenſely, that I loſt not a moment of the day, and often borrowed from the night; ſo that in a very few months I made an unuſual progreſs. My reputation was already ſo great, that I ſoon ſaw my name put, without any ſolicitation, in the liſt of thoſe for whom benefices were intended, and was congratulated on the preferment and credit I was likely to obtain. I perſevered with the utmoſt fervor in all religious

gious exercises, and Tiberge openly exulted in what he with reason called his work; and I have frequently seen him shed tears while he congratulated himself on my conversion.

But how frail are all resolutions, and how little to be depended upon is the utmost apparent steadiness in a very young man. While I daily proceeded in this career, and began as I imagined to taste all the tranquility arising from a clear conscience in the performance of my duty, and from the prospect of solid happiness both here and hereafter; even in this disposition of mind, while I preferred a sober meditation, or studying a page of St. Augustine, to all other pleasures, without even excepting the charms I found in the society of Mademoiselle Manon, and while I beheld with pious horror the humiliating and disgraceful

thraldom in which ſhe had held me, even at that hour a ſnare was preparing for me, into which I not only fell, but in conſequence of which I was dragged to the bottom of an abyſs of vice and infamy from whence there is no return.

It was now near a twelve month ſince I had been at Paris, without enquiring after Manon. At firſt I found this forbearance required great efforts, and a conſtant guard on myſelf; but the watchful prudence and nice admonitions of Tiberge, as well as my own reflections, prevailed ſo far, that at the end of this period I thought myſelf on the point of forgetting for ever that ſeducing but perfidious charmer.

At this time it happened that I was to exhibit in public a theological exerciſe, and I had invited many perſons of faſhion to

to honor me with their preſence, by which means my name and intentions became known throughout Paris. It reached the ears of Manon: and though ſhe could not be abſolutely certain it was myſelf under my newly aſſumed title of the Abbé des Grieux, yet the name itſelf was too intereſting to her not to give her a ſtrong curioſity to liſten whenever it was mentioned; and not being able to ſatisfy herſelf any otherwiſe whether it was me or not, ſhe attended at St. Sulpice with ſome of her acquaintance, where in the Abbé des Grieux, exhibiting a theological compoſition, ſhe eaſily recogniſed her deceived and forſaken lover.

I knew nothing of this viſit at the time; for in theſe places there are departments where the ladies ſit, concealed by a lattice and curtains. I returned to my college chambers overwhelmed with praiſes

and compliments on my performance, when about an hour afterwards I was informed that a lady in the parlour deſired to ſpeak to me. I inſtantly attended her; but what was my aſtoniſhment and emotion, when in this ſtranger I beheld Manon! It was herſelf, but infinitely more lovely and dazzling than I had ever yet ſeen her. Her countenance was more bewitching than ever; her air and ſhape all that can be imagined of elegance and grace. She was now in her eighteenth year, and her beauty was ſuch as muſt have been beheld to be fully known, for to conceive it from deſcription is impoſſible!

Had a thunder bolt fallen before me, it could not more entirely have deprived me of my ſenſes. I knew it was herſelf, but that was all. I trembled, my lips refuſed to articulate the words I would have

have uttered, and with down caſt eyes and a palpitating heart I awaited in ſilence an explanation of this extraordinary viſit. Her embarraſſment was at firſt equal to mine: but finding I continued ſilent, ſhe put a handkerchief to her eyes to wipe away the tears with which they were filled, and then in a timid and faultering voice ſaid, that ſhe confeſſed her conduct might deſerve my contempt and hatred, yet ſurely if ever I had had any regard for her, it was cruel to let almoſt two years paſs away without once enquiring after her; and it accorded but little with the tenderneſs of my nature to ſee her in the diſtreſs ſhe was then in before me, without endeavouring to conſole her, without offering one word of pity or pardon.

While ſhe ſpoke, the diſorder of my ſoul encreaſed. She ſat down. I con-

tinued ſtanding, and leaning againſt the wainſcot, turned half from her, not daring to meet her eyes. I attempted to reply, but the words died away on my lips, and left me only the power to articulate, ah! perfidious, cruel, cruel Manon! Her tears flowed faſt, while ſhe ſaid that ſhe meant not to attempt to juſtify herſelf. What do you mean then, cried I? To die! ſaid ſhe, if I cannot regain your heart: for without it I find life inſupportable. Ah, no! anſwered I, barbarous, ungrateful Manon! it is *my* life you would have; my life, which is the only thing I have not already ſacrificed to you. Farewel! You know your fatal aſcendancy; too well I feel that my heart, my weak heart has never ceaſed to be your's. At theſe words ſhe aroſe, and threw herſelf into my arms, giving me the moſt paſſionate careſſes, and laviſhing on me every epithet of endearment that the tendereſt love could dictate. I

received

received her fondneſs with languor and coldneſs, my ſenſes had not yet recovered the torpor into which the firſt ſhock of this dear but fatal interview had thrown them. I ſhuddered at the gulph I ſaw opening under my feet, which I knew I ſhould not have ſtrength to avoid; as a traveller who finds himſelf benighted amidſt precipices and torrents which he is obliged to paſs, feels his courage and ſtrength forſake him, and trembles while he examines the various horrors that ſurround him.

We ſat down by each other. I took her hand in mine, and looking mournfully on her, ah, Manon! ſaid I; Manon! could I have expected the dark, the barbarous treaſon with which you have repaid the ſincereſt and moſt ardent love? Cruel girl! how could you prevail on yourſelf ſo inhumanly to betray a heart which was wholly

wholly your's; which truſted all its hopes to you? Ah! how could you deliberately determine to aſſaſſinate this boſom, which had no wiſh, no happineſs but what you beſtowed; or any deſire ſo warm as that of ſeeing you happy! Tell me, fickle and deſtructive beauty! have you found another like it? Nature among all her works has made none ſo formed for love, faith, and deſpair! Tell me, however, have you not ſometimes regretted the heart you had wounded to death?—ſurely you muſt. Yet now that you come voluntarily to laviſh on me all theſe teſtimonies of affection, what dependance can I have upon you? To my deſtruction, I ſee you are more lovely, more bewitching than ever! By all the anguiſh I have ſuffered! by all the ſacrifices I have made you! tell me, Manon, will you be more faithful? She anſwered me ſo affectingly, proteſted with

with ſo much earneſtneſs her ſincere repentance, and ſo ſolemnly aſſured me of her future fidelity, that my heart was wholly ſubdued.

Ah, Manon! ſaid I, intermingling expreſſions of ſacred and profane love, thou art too amiable for a creature! I find my ſoul influenced by an irreſiſtible delectation! All that I learned of intellectual liberty at St. Sulpice is a chimera. I go to loſe my fortune, my reputation, every thing for you! I ſee it plainly. I read my deſtiny in that heavenly face. But for what ſacrifices, what misfortunes, will not your love conſole me! Fortune and glory, I give ye to the winds! my hopes of preferment I reſign, and give up all that I cannot enjoy with thee! Vain and deſpicable appear all my ſchemes, and my firmeſt reſolutions are diſſolved by one glance of thoſe ſeducing eyes.

I now

I now promiſed her an eternal and ſincere forgiveneſs for all that had paſſed; and when we began to diſcourſe with more coherence, I deſired her to tell me by what temptations ſhe had been prevailed upon to leave me and to betray me to my father. She told me that Monſieur de Beaumanoir having ſeen her at the window, became paſſionately in love with her, and made her a declaration in the ſtile of a Farmer General; that is, he wrote to offer her an handſome allowance, a houſe, carriage and jewels, if ſhe would quit me and live with him. At firſt ſhe affected to capitulate only in hopes of getting from him a ſum of money which might enable us to live comfortably, but ſhe gradually became dazzled by his preſents and promiſes. But I might judge, ſhe ſaid, of her reluctance and remorſe, when I recollected the grief that overwhelmed her the evening of our ſeparation;

tion; and that not withſtanding the opulence that had ſurrounded her, ſhe had never been happy with De Beaumanoir: not only becauſe he poſſeſſed not my ſentiments and my manners, but becauſe, amid all the gaiety and pleaſure ſhe was induced to partake, the remembrance of my love and attachment ſtill feſtered in her heart, which inceſſantly reminded her of her ingratitude, and tormented her with reproaches, for which diſſipation was a very inadequate remedy.

She mentioned the viſit Tiberge had made her. Had he ſhewn me a dagger ſent by you to avenge your wrongs, I think it could not have ſtruck me more painfully than did the ſound of your name; and his enquiries I was quite unable to anſwer. She then told me how ſhe happened to hear of my being at Paris, and of the exerciſe I was to perform

form at the Sorbonne; and that ſhe had been ſo agitated during the performance, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty ſhe reſtrained her tears and exclamations. Having ſtaid till the laſt, that her diſorder might not be noticed, and diſengaged herſelf from her companions, ſhe liſtened only to the impetuoſity of her wiſhes to ſpeak to me, and ordered her coach directly to St. Sulpice, determined not to ſurvive my refuſing to forgive her.

Where is the ſavage heart that this lively repentance and returning tenderneſs would not have affected? As to myſelf, I felt at that moment that I ſhould for Manon have reſigned all the Biſhopricks of the Chriſtian world.

But it was time to conſider what we intended to do. Manon deſired me inſtantly to quit the ſeminary, that we might

might conſult together in a place of greater ſafety; and as I then recollected that every moment it was probable Tiberge might come in ſearch of me, there was no time for heſitation. She got into her coach, and ordered it to wait at the corner of a neighbouring ſtreet; and a moment afterwards I eſcaped from the houſe without being queſtioned by the porter, and rejoined her. We then drove to la fripperie, where I furniſhed myſelf with a coat, hat, and a ſword, which Manon paid for. I had not a ſhilling in my pocket; and we both ſo much dreaded being impeded in our flight, that ſhe inſiſted on my not going to my room to fetch what money I had. Indeed the ſum was inconſiderable: and as ſhe was well provided, we relinquiſhed it without reluctance.

We conferred together in the fripier's ſhop on what was next to be done. Manon determined

determined to keep no terms with De Beaumanoir, but to ſacrifice him wholly to me. I will leave the furniture, ſaid ſhe, and the things in the houſe, exactly as they are; but the jewels he has given me are ſurely my own, as are about ſixty thouſand francs, which I have ſaved out of the ſums of money he has given me ſince I have lived with him. He has no power over me, therefore we may take a convenient houſe, and live comfortably at Paris without any apprehenſions of his moleſting us.

I repreſented to her that tho' there was no riſk for her in ſuch an arrangement, there was much for me, who could hardly fail of being known, and ſhould continually be expoſed to the ſame danger I had before experienced. I found however that to quit Paris would be extremely diſagreeable to her; and before the fear of making

ing her uneaſy every other conſideration vaniſhed. I therefore thought of a middle courſe, which was, to hire an houſe or lodging in the immediate neighbourhood of Paris, from whence we might be ſoon in town when buſineſs or pleaſure called us. To this ſhe aſſented, and we fixed on Chaillot; after which Manon went back to her houſe, directing me to wait for her at the little gate of the Thuilleries; whither ſhe returned to me in leſs than an hour in an hired coach, in which was the ſervant who waited on her, and ſeveral large trunks, containing her cloaths, jewels, and linen.

We haſtened immediately to Chaillot, and lodged that night at the inn, intending to employ the next day in ſeeking an houſe or elegant lodging. We ſoon found one that was exactly to our mind: and there we began to live ſo happily, that I believed

believed all my ſorrows were at an end. The ſoftneſs and ſweetneſs of Manon's temper, her attention to the ſlighteſt of my wiſhes, and the charms of her wit and vivacity, made me forget, in the delirium of the tendereſt love, all I had ſuffered and all I had ſacrificed.

As we had now acquired a little more experience, I determined to conſider well the ſum we poſſeſſed, and regulate our expences accordingly. Sixty thouſand francs, tho' a conſiderable ſum, were not enough for the demands of a long life; nor were either of us much diſpoſed to ſtraiten ourſelves in point of expence. Œconomy was by no means a virtue which either Manon or I poſſeſſed: but my mode of calculating, in ſpeaking of our future manner of life to her, was thus: Two thouſand crowns a year, ſaid I, will maintain us handſomely while we continue at Chaillot, where

where we will live with ſimple elegance. Our principal expences will be for a coach and public places. As you love the opera, we will go thither twice a week: as to play, we will determine to loſe no more than two piſtoles at a ſitting. By theſe regulations our ſixty thouſand francs may laſt nine or ten years, during which time it is almoſt impoſſible but that ſome event muſt happen that will ſet us entirely at eaſe. My father is not young, and it is improbable he ſhould live ſo long; at his deceaſe I ſhall poſſeſs a fortune that will place me beyond the malice of my deſtiny.

This management was not the moſt abſurd of my plans, had we been wiſe enough to have adhered to it. But our reſolution did not hold out above a month. Manon was paſſionately fond of diſſipation, I was paſſionately fond of her, and every

every moment new temptations to expence aroſe; while on my part, far from regretting the profuſion with which ſhe threw away money, I ſtudied to anticipate her wiſhes, and to procure for her whatever ſhe liked.

Our reſidence at Chaillot now began to be diſagreeable to her. Winter was approaching, every body was going back to Paris, and the country became deſerted and melancholy. She propoſed that we ſhould return, and eſtabliſh ourſelves there; but to that I had numberleſs reaſons for not conſenting: to gratify her however in ſome meaſure, I agreed to take a ready furniſhed apartment, where we might occaſionally paſs the night; for as we were ſometimes late at public places, we found it inconvenient to return home to Chaillot at thoſe hours, which was her principal plea for deſiring to change our

our reſidence. In purſuance of this ſcheme, which was the very worſt I could have adopted, we engaged a furniſhed lodging, and frequently paſſed the night there; but it ſoon was the remote occaſion of our undoing, by entangling us in connections and events, from the conſequences of which we could never after recover.

Manon had a brother in the guards many years older than herſelf, who moſt unhappily for us lodged in the very ſtreet where we took this temporary apartment. He ſaw his ſiſter at the window, and came without ceremony to ſpeak to her. This man was rude, brutal and uneducated, without honor, ſentiment or pity; and knowing ſomething of his ſiſter's adventures, he began by loading her with every term he could imagine of the groſſeſt abuſe. It happened fortunately for us both

both that I was gone out when he came, as I was not at all diſpoſed to ſuffer ſuch an inſult tamely. When I returned to Manon, which was a few minutes after he had left her, I found her in tears and conſternation; and on enquiring the cauſe, ſhe related to me what had happened. Her entreaties only prevented my going out inſtantly in ſearch of him: but while we were yet debating he returned. I did not however know him; and Manon, terrified at the indignation I had expreſſed againſt him, had not courage to tell me. I received him therefore as a ſtranger, while he, aſſuming an air of pleaſantry, told Manon he was come to beg her pardon for his violent behaviour. Then addreſſing himſelf to me, he ſaid he had believed at firſt that his ſiſter lived in a diſorderly and debauched way, which had excited his diſpleaſure, but having heard from my ſervants who I was, he had

ſince

ſince enquired my character, which enquiry turned out ſo much to my advantage, that far from meaning to renew his reproaches to his ſiſter, he was come to offer us his ſervices, and to aſſure us that nothing would make him happier than to live in friendſhip with us. Ridiculous and affronting as I thought this ſpeech, I ſaw the eyes of Manon brighten on it, and a look from her was always enough to determine me: I therefore gave him a civil anſwer, and accepted of his offered hand; after which we detained him to dinner, and he ſoon became ſo familiar, and ſo perfectly at his eaſe, that when he found we intended to return that evening to Chaillot he deſired to accompany us, and took his place in our coach with great compoſure.

From that period he became much more maſter of my houſe than I was myſelf.

ſelf. He honored me with the appellation of brother; and on the ſtrength of the relationſhip, made uſe of our houſe and our purſe as his own; bringing his friends (who were far from being very deſirable acquaintance) to be entertained at our expence. He went ſtill farther, and not only engaged us to pay ſeveral debts for him, for large ſums, but ordered himſelf faſhionable cloaths and handſome linen, the bills for which he ſent to us to be diſcharged. To all theſe impoſitions I for ſome time ſubmitted rather than give pain to Manon, and I affected not to know the ſums he from time to time drew from her. Sometimes indeed, when he had a ſucceſsful run of play, he had the conſcience to return her a part of what he had taken; but our whole fund was too inconſiderable to ſupport long the addition of his demands to expences before too great. I determined therefore to

ſpeak

ſpeak to him plainly, when an accident intervened which precluded the neceſſity of my remonſtrance, and plunged me into an abyſs of diſtreſs and wretchedneſs.

We had paſſed a day and a night at Paris, as we often did, when the following morning the ſervant, who on theſe occaſions was left at Chaillot, came early to tell me, that in the night the houſe had by ſome accident taken fire, which was with the utmoſt difficulty extinguiſhed by the neighbours. I aſked her if our furniture had ſuffered, and if we had loſt any thing? She told me that the croud, which had preſſed in under pretence of aſſiſting, had been ſo great, that ſhe could anſwer for nothing, and that all the doors had been broken. My heart ſunk when I thought of the caſket I had left in my cloſet, in which the whole of our little

fortune was depoſited. I ran to Chaillot. Alas! how fruitleſsly! The caſket was gone, and we were reduced at once to the moſt deplorable poverty. I then felt how much it was poſſible to love money, without being avaricious. I foreſaw all the evils to which this cruel loſs would expoſe me, and I was ſtruck with it as with the hand of death. Ah! exclaimed I, I ſhall loſe again all that makes life worth my care; for I know that Manon, all tender and attached to me as ſhe is in proſperity, will ſhrink from poverty and adverſity: ſhe will again ſacrifice me to the pleaſures of affluence, which ſo many will be ready to offer her, and nothing will remain for me but eternal deſpair.

Theſe reflections were ſo dreadful, that I heſitated whether it was not better to end all my ſufferings by a voluntary death, than to live in the wretchedneſs I ſaw preparing

paring for me. But then, as is always the caſe in theſe dreadful paroxiſms of paſſion, it occured to me that I ſhould firſt enquire if no reſource remained; and an idea preſented itſelf that a little ſoftened the anguiſh of my mind. I thought it not impoſſible to conceal from Manon this heavy loſs, at leaſt for a little while; and hoped that chance or good fortune might in the interim furniſh me with the means of ſupporting her in the way ſhe now lived in. I thought, ſaid I to myſelf, when I conſidered the reſourſe we have now loſt, that twenty thouſand crowns would ſuffice us ten years; let me ſuppoſe thoſe ten years already gone, and that none of the events I thought probable, had happened in my family. Had it been ſo, how did I then mean to have ſupported myſelf? In truth I know not: but whatever I ſhould have done then, I may do now. How many are

there who live at Paris, whoſe reſources nobody knows; and who, without any advantages of perſon or underſtanding, owe their fortune entirely to themſelves. Nature, to make amends for the injuſtice of fortune, frequently beſtows genius and talents on thoſe to whom ſhe has denied, or from whom ſhe has withdrawn her favors; by which the different ranks of men are brought nearer an equality: and the poor, by adminiſtering to the vanity or pleaſures of the rich, partake of the advantages of affluence.

By theſe arguments I tried to perſuade myſelf that I might find ſome method to ſupport Manon; and for her there was nothing I would not have undertaken. I became in a ſhort time more compoſed; and I determined to conſult Monſieur L'Eſcaut, the brother of Manon, as to what courſe of life I ought to enter upon in

in my preſent ſituation. He was perfectly acquainted with the town; and on ſeveral occaſions I had ſeen enough of his manner of life, to be convinced that it was not from any property he poſſeſſed, or from the king's pay, that his appearance and expences were ſupported. I went to him, and related to him what had happened, ſhewing at the ſame time my purſe, containing only about twenty piſtoles, which was now become all my fortune; and I aſked him, whether on a view of my circumſtances he thought it moſt adviſeable for me to ſhoot myſelf through the head, or wait till famine and deſpair put an end to my exiſtence.

He anſwered with the utmoſt coolneſs, that for a young fellow like me to ſhoot myſelf was very abſurd, and what no lad of ſpirit would think of; and as to dying of famine and deſpair, any body might

be reduced to that, who was ſo ſcrupulous as to refuſe the means which his own talents or connections might furniſh him with; and that if I would conſider what I was fitteſt for, I might aſſure myſelf of his advice and aſſiſtance. All this is very vague, Monſieur L'Eſcaut, ſaid I; my wants require an inſtant ſupply, or how am I to meet Manon? Apropos, anſwered he, of Manon; your inquietude is about her, and yet in her alone you are poſſeſſed of the means to finiſh all your ſolicitudes: nay more, her beauty is a reſource to maintain her, you and me. The rage and indignation I found riſing in my heart was with difficulty reſtrained while he continued to tell me that if I would follow his advice he would engage before evening to divide a thouſand crowns with us; for I am acquainted, ſaid he, with an old nobleman, ſo liberal and ſo amorous, that he would

not

not fail to offer any price for the good graces of ſo handſome a girl as my ſiſter.

Stop, Monſieur L'Eſcaut! cried I; this is diſcourſe to which I cannot liſten, and which I beg never to hear repeated. I had indeed conceived a better opinion of your friendſhip for me, and little thought to have been affronted with ſo diſgraceful a propoſal. He laughed at my warmth; and with the moſt diſguſting aſſurance told me, that ſince his ſiſter had once broken through the laws of her ſex, (tho' in favor of the man in the world for whom he had the greateſt eſteem) he thought any future violation of decorum a matter of the moſt perfect indifference; and had reconciled himſelf to her with no other view than to ſhare the profits of her proſtitution.

Shocked as I was with this infamous declaration, and with the wretch who made

it, he was now ſo neceſſary to me that I dared not expreſs the horror and deteſtation he inſpired me with; and therefore, with a forced ſmile, told him that this was an expedient to be thought of only at the laſt extremity. I beſought him to conſider of ſome other, and he then propoſed to me to become the penſioner of ſome rich dowager, to whom my age and figure might recommend me: but this plan was hardly leſs repugnant to me than the other, and I enquired of him what he thought of play? The gaming table, anſwered he, is certainly a great reſource, but it requires to be well underſtood. To undertake to play on only the common chances, is indeed to compleat or perpetuate your ruin. You can never make any thing of it, unleſs you know how to avail yourſelf of thoſe little manœuvres with which men of genius are obliged to correct or prevent the caprices of fortune.

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The beſt thing I can think of for you, continued he, is the Aſſociation; but I much doubt whether the confederates will accept a member of your age: however I will ſee what is to be done. So ſaying, he left me, having offered me his purſe if I ſhould have occaſion for it, which indeed was more than I expected of him; but I did not accept it, and requeſted only that he would not acquaint Manon with the loſs I had ſuſtained, nor with the ſubject of our converſation, which he readily promiſed.

I left him in greater uneaſineſs than I had met him, and heartily repented having entruſted him with my painful ſecret. I had obtained nothing by it which he might not equally have done for me without this imprudent confidence. Nor could I at all depend on his promiſe of ſecrecy: on the contrary, I had every reaſon to apprehend that he would diſcloſe it, to induce Manon

to

to quit me; and in the view of making his advantage of her charms, prevail on her to ſeek the protection of a richer and more fortunate lover.

Theſe ideas threw me back into all the agony of mind from which I had juſt recovered. I then thought of writing to my father, and under pretence of feeling new regret for my indiſcretions, ſolicit a ſupply of money, to enable me to return home: but to this expedient I dared not truſt, when I remembered that notwithſtanding all his affection for me, and the tenderneſs of his nature, he had cloſely confined me ſix months for my firſt fault; whence it was but too probable, that for a ſecond error, and after all the noiſe occaſioned by my flight from St. Sulpice, I ſhould be treated with infinitely greater rigour, if I put myſelf into his power again.

Amidſt

Amidſt a chaos of perplexing thoughts, one at length occurred to me that I was aſtoniſhed I had not recollected ſooner; which was to apply to my friend Tiberge, from whoſe unfailing friendſhip I believed I ſhould obtain immediate aſſiſtance. The triumph of virtue is here worthy of remark. Certain as I was that Tiberge would diſapprove my manner of life, yet ſo ſtrong was my reliance on his honor and generoſity, that I knew I ran no riſque by entruſting him with my neceſſities, and the place of my abode; and that although he might not have it in his power to aſſiſt me; I ſhould meet with compaſſion and ſympathy from him. The heart that ſhrinks from the generality of mankind, opens itſelf before goodneſs and probity like his, as a flower which cloſes before the chilling wind, expands to the genial influence of the vernal ſun.

In

In purſuance of this hope of aſſiſtance, I determined to ſee Tiberge before evening; and immediately returned home to write a few lines to him, in which I deſired he would meet me at a time and place I named to him; and entreated ſecrecy and diſcretion, as abſolutely neceſſary in the preſent ſtate of my affairs. The joy I felt in the hope of Tiberge's aſſiſtance effaced the traces of uneaſineſs which Manon muſt otherwiſe have perceived on my countenance. I mentioned to her the accident that had happened at Chaillot as a trifle which ought not to diſturb her; and as ſhe was always beſt pleaſed to be at Paris, ſhe was not ſorry to hear me ſay we would continue there, till ſome ſlight reparations were made that the fire rendered neceſſary.

About an hour after I had ſent my letter I received Tiberge's anſwer, who promiſed

promiſed to meet me at the place I had appointed. I went thither with the utmoſt impatience, though not without a ſenſation of ſhame and remorſe at appearing before a friend whoſe very looks muſt reproach me for the faults and diſorders of my life. But the gentleneſs and candor of his character, and the preſſing neceſſities of Manon, gave me confidence to meet him. The place of aſſignation was the garden of the palace royal. Tiberge was there before me; and as ſoon as he ſaw me, approached with open arms, and with tears in his eyes. I meet you, ſaid I, my dear Tiberge, with confuſion; and I feel a lively ſorrow for my ingratitude towards you. Tell me, I conjure you, if it is yet permitted me to call you my friend, after having ſo much deſerved to loſe your eſteem and affection? He anſwered me, with an air of concern, that nothing could ever make him diſown that title; and that if I permitted him to ſay ſo, my misfortunes

tunes and errors had redoubled his regard for me; a regard, continued he, which I muſt ſtill cheriſh, notwithſtanding the pain it gives me, for pain I muſt feel in contemplating your unhappy infatuation. I am as one who ſees a beloved object dying of a diſeaſe to which he is not ſuffered to apply a remedy. A deep ſigh here eſcaped me. Ah! my friend, cried I, your compaſſion muſt be indeed great if it equals the torture that I ſuffer at this moment. I almoſt dread to diſcloſe to you from whence it ariſes that I am juſt now ſo wretched; but ſo compleatly am I miſerable, that you would pity me though you loved me leſs than you do.

He deſired I would recount to him what had happened ſince I ſo precipitately and imprudently left St. Sulpice. I gave him, without diſſimulation, a detail of all that had paſſed; and far from diſguiſing or

ſoftening

ſoftening my errors, I confeſſed them in their utmoſt extent, and ſpoke of my fatal paſſion with all the ardor with which I felt it. I repreſented myſelf as one under the influence of an overruling deſtiny, from which I could not eſcape; but which muſt overwhelm a wretch for whom all the endeavours of honor, duty and friendſhip had been exhauſted in vain. I drew ſo lively a picture of the ſtate of my mind, and the agonies of fear and deſpair I had felt only two hours before, and which I muſt again feel if my friend abandoned me as I had already been abandoned by fortune, that poor Tiberge was extremely affected, and compaſſion gave him emotions almoſt as ſtrong as my uneaſineſs gave me. He repeated the moſt friendly aſſurances of aſſiſtance, but ſpoke as if my parting with Manon was a meaſure which in my preſent circumſtances I certainly meant to

to adopt. To undeceive him at once as to that, I told him plainly that it was that very ſeparation I dreaded as the greateſt evil that could befall me; and that I would ſuffer the laſt extremity of miſery, nay the moſt cruel death, rather than ſubmit to what would be the moſt inſupportable of all misfortunes.

If you revolt, ſaid Tiberge, at a propoſal which I conſider as a preliminary to your return to reaſon and to happineſs, tell me, dear Charles, what I can do for you? I dared not ſay that it was with his purſe he could aſſiſt me; but at length he comprehended it, and told me he underſtood me.

For ſome moments he ſtood ſilent and penſive, deliberating how to act. To what a ſituation do you reduce me, ſaid he. Shall I refuſe you, my friend, the only

only ſuccour you will accept, or ſhall I violate all my duty by granting it. Alas! in doing the latter do I not encourage you to perſevere in a courſe of life ruinous to your principles, and deſtructive of your character? But yet, continued he, it may be that the unhappy ſituation of your affairs, the dread of indigence, and the tumult of contending paſſions, leave you not at liberty to conquer this unhappy malady of the ſoul. A mind ill at eaſe liſtens not to the voice of honor, and knows not how to regain a path once loſt. I will therefore, my unfortunate friend, find means to aſſiſt you, but let me make this condition with you; which is, that you ſhall tell me where you are to be found, and ſuffer me to try what I can do to recall you once more to reputation and tranquillity. I agreed with pleaſure to this reaſonable requeſt, and implored his compaſſion for

his poor friend, the peculiar malignity of whoſe fate made the ſublime attachment of ſuch a ſoul as his of no avail in ſaving him from misfortune and wretchedneſs.

We now went together to his banker's, who on his note advanced an hundred piſtoles, for he was by no means able to furniſh me with it himſelf in ready money. I have already obſerved he was not rich from his family; and tho' his benefice was worth a thouſand crowns a year, yet this being the firſt year he poſſeſſed it, he had received no part of the income: it was therefore on the credit of the growing profits that he made me this advance. I felt moſt truly his extraordinary generoſity; ſo deeply indeed did it for the moment affect me, that I could not but conſider with remorſe my unjuſtifiable conduct, and the unworthy captivity in which I was held. This idea, and a ſenſe of the mean and

wretched

wretched part I was acting, made me wiſh to throw off my chains; but the moment I ſaw Manon all theſe reflections vaniſhed: a ſmile, a look from her, would I verily believe have drawn me out of Paradiſe; and while I gazed on the moſt perfect and moſt enchanting of all Heaven's works, I wondered how I could ever think of ceaſing to adore an object ſo irreſiſtibly charming.

Beautiful however as her form was, her mind had ſome unhappy ſingularities that were of the moſt diſtreſſing conſequence to me. Without the ſmalleſt taint of avarice, ſhe could not for a moment ſuſtain the dread of wanting money. Pleaſure and diſſipation were abſolutely neceſſary for her; and as long as ſhe could be amuſed, ſhe never troubled herſelf about the means by which her amuſements were procured; nor beſtowed a thought on the future, while the preſent was paſſing away agreeably. And

tho'

tho' ſhe profeſſed to love me ardently, and proteſted that every other man was indifferent to her, I had but too much reaſon to fear that all her tenderneſs for me would be unequal to ſupport her againſt the dread of want. With a moderate fortune, I believed ſhe would have preferred me to all the world; but I believed alſo, that ſhe would abandon me for ſome new De Beaumanoir, when I ſhould have nothing to offer her but the homage of a tender heart. On ſome lovers this temper would have perfected a cure, but on me it had another effect, and determined me to circumſcribe my own expences, rather than not ſupport her's; and not to refuſe her even the moſt ſuperfluous gratifications, tho' I denied myſelf the neceſſaries of life.

The coach that we kept was a ſubject of greater alarm to me than all the reſt; for it was impoſſible to flatter myſelf that we

we could pay the weekly coſt of the coachman and horſes. L'Eſcaut knew I had borrowed an hundred piſtoles of a friend, and to him I imparted my uneaſineſs about the coach. He then renewed our converſation on the ſubject of play, and told me that if I had now an inclination to try my fortune, it would be proper to introduce myſelf to the aſſociation by ſpending an hundred or an hundred and fifty livres in making an entertainment for them; which he thought, together with his recommendation, would enſure my reception among them on a reſpectable footing, and enliſt me as a novice of ſome conſequence among the Chevaliers d'Induſtrie.

Great as my diſlike was to become a member of ſuch a ſociety, all my ſcruples vaniſhed before the dread of loſing Manon, and I agreed to his propoſal. L'Eſcaut preſented me to them the next evening as a relation

prizingly amended, that I found myſelf maſter of conſiderable ſums, beſides thoſe which I honeſtly paid to the aſſociates as their ſhare of the booty. I then no longer dreaded to diſcover to Manon the loſs we had ſuſtained at Chaillot; and to convince her ſhe had no reaſon to lament it, I hired an handſome furniſhed houſe, and put our eſtabliſhment on the footing of a family in affluence and ſecurity.

During this time Tiberge made me frequent viſits; and there was no end to the lectures he gave me. He unceaſingly repreſented to me that my preſent way of life was ruinous to my morals, my reputation, and my fortune. I heard him with patience condemn a conduct I felt not the leaſt inclination to alter. I knew he really meant well, and could not be angry at his zeal, which however began to be very fatiguing to Manon. Sometimes in her preſence

preſence I laughed at his ſolemn remonſtrances, and exhorted him not to be more ſcrupulous than were numberleſs biſhops and other of the clergy, who made no difficulty of keeping a fat benefice with a fair miſtreſs; and ſhewing him the fine eyes of Manon, would laughingly aſk him if an attachment to ſo charming an object could at my age be a crying ſin.

Tiberge, in his turn had patience with me; and ſtill hoping that his perſevering friendſhip might help to open my eyes, he ſacrificed even his rigid attention to appearances, and continued for ſome weeks to frequent my houſe, diſreputable as it was. But when at the end of that time he found no hopes of an alteration, but that notwithſtanding my expenſive eſtabliſhment my riches ſeemed to encreaſe; when he found that I enlarged my ſtile of living, and purſued with redoubled eagerneſs

every ſcheme of luxury and diſſipation; he began to deſpair of making any impreſſion on me; and aſſuming a ſeverer tone, determined to ſpeak to me plainly and for the laſt time. An opportunity ſoon offered; and he began by expreſſing the concern it gave him to ſee me ſo reſolutely purſue a way of life, offenſive to Heaven, and diſhonorable towards the world; and which muſt inevitably plunge me into miſeries, which I muſt ſuſtain without the conſolation of pity, and in the dreadful reflection of having deſerved them.

It is impoſſible, ſaid he, that the money which ſupports all this profuſion can be honeſtly acquired: you have gained it by illegal and diſhonorable methods, and by ſuch be aſſured you will loſe it. Indeed the moſt dreadful puniſhment Heaven could inflict would be to ſuffer you to enjoy it in tranquillity. All my

advice

advice is I ſee uſeleſs, and will very ſoon be troubleſome. Adieu, therefore, my weak, unhappy friend! May your ſudden wealth fade like a dream, and may you again awaken, poor and friendleſs, from this wretched intoxication, from which I fear nothing but the iron hand of adverſity will rouſe you! then you will find me again ready to love and ſerve you, as I have ever willingly done till now: but here I break off all commerce with you; deteſting and flying from the contagion of ſucceſsful wickedneſs, and feeling my regret and ſorrow for your infatuation alleviated only by the conſciouſneſs of having done *my* duty in endeavouring to recall you to yours.

After this ſevere remonſtrance he aroſe to quit the room. I would have ſtopped him; but Manon, who was preſent, deſired me to let him go, for a tedious en-

thuſiaſt, whoſe brains ſhe ſaid was touched by the cant he had heard at St. Sulpice. His diſcourſe however did not wholly fail of effect: chagrin and diſquiet remained for a while ſtrongly marked on my countenance; but a kiſs from Manon, who ſmiled in my face, and propoſed ſome new ſcheme of pleaſure, to diſſipate the effect of this apoſtolic harangue of my father confeſſor, as ſhe laughingly called Tillerge, ſoon drove him and all he had ſaid out of my mind.

We lived at this time in ſuch a conſtant ſucceſſion of amuſements, that I had little time and leſs inclination to reflect. My ſucceſs daily encreaſed my riches, and with it our attachment ſeemed if poſſible to encreaſe alſo. Venus and Fortune never had two happier ſubjects than we then were. I was tempted to deny that a world where I poſſeſſed ſo much happineſs, could be

be a vale of tears; and forgetting every thing I had before ſuffered, became an epicurean in principle as well as in practice. But all this was not to laſt: bitterneſs and anguiſh were following cloſe upon us, and all Tiberge's prophecies on the point of being fulfilled. I had won ſo much money at play, that I began to conſider how I ſhould place it out to the beſt advantage: but I deliberated inſtead of acting, and as had been my cuſtom in all the reaſonable ſchemes I had ever formed, I put it off 'till it was too late.

I had hired a valet de chambre, who was well acquainted with the ſource from which I procured money, and was indeed too much entruſted: Manon's maid, who was alſo much in her miſtreſs's favor, and as much relied upon, was a very pretty girl, and my man took it into his head to be in love with her; the con-

ſequence of which was, that they, to procure themſelves money to enable them to marry and eſtabliſh themſelves, contrived a ſcheme to rob us; which they executed with ſo much ſucceſs, that we never afterwards could recover from the inconveniencies it threw us into. To rob us indeed was eaſy enough, conſidering the thoughtleſs and unguarded way in which we lived.

One evening after the play we ſupped with L'Eſcaut, and returning home about midnight, I called as uſual for my valet de chambre, and Manon for her woman; the other ſervant told us they had both been gone out ſome hours, having firſt ſent away ſeveral trunks and packages, as they ſaid, by my orders. I inſtantly gueſſed at part of the truth; and on going into my apartment I found the locks of my bureau had been forced, my notes

and

and money taken, together with my cloaths and linen, of which they had not left me even a change. Before I could recover from the ſhock occaſioned by this diſcovery, Manon came to me to tell me that the ſame plunder had been practiſed in her apartment. It was with difficulty I acquired ſufficient command of myſelf to refrain from cries and exclamations; but the apprehenſion of communicating my deſpair to Manon, made me affect a calmneſs I was far from feeling. Oh! cried I, be not ſo uneaſy; ſome dupe at the hotel de Tranſylvanie ſhall make us amends. But Manon was not to be ſo eaſily conſoled; and her diſtreſs and conſternation overcame every effort I could make to reſtore her courage and my own. We are loſt, ſaid ſhe; ruined beyond reſource! In effect I felt this to be too true: we were at once ſtripped and pennyleſs.

Not knowing what elſe to do, I ran back to L'Eſcaut, who adviſed me to go immediately to the Lieutenant of the Police, and the Grand Provoſt of Paris. I did ſo, but I only encreaſed the calamities which ſurrounded me; for beſides that the enquiries of theſe officers of juſtice were of no avail, I gave L'Eſcaut, who went directly to his ſiſter, time and opportunity to talk to her, and to prevail on her to conſent to a project which made me more wretched than my loſs.

He told her that if ſhe would ſuffer him to introduce her to Monſieur Gevres de Malleville, a man as celebrated for debauchery as for his riches, and whoſe liberality was well known where he was attached, that ſhe would be immediately placed in a more brilliant ſituation than any ſhe had ever enjoyed; and probably obtain from this ſuperannuated libertine, a

ſettlement

ſettlement which would put her out of the reach of the perverſe deſtiny that with me ſeemed to purſue her. In a word, he ſaid ſo much, that in the agitation of her ſpirits ſhe conſented to enter into his views; and this honorable reſolution was taken before my return, the execution of it being delayed only till the next day, to give L'Eſcaut an opportunity of apprizing De Malleville of the lady's favourable ſentiments. When I got to my houſe, after my fruitleſs application to the Police, I found this kind brother waiting for me; but Manon was gone to bed, leaving a meſſage for me with the ſervants, that being extremely fatigued, ſhe deſired to remain alone in her own apartment.

L'Eſcaut, after offering me the loan of ſome piſtoles, which I accepted, quitted me alſo, and I went to bed at four o'clock; but the tumult of my blood, and anxiety

for

for our future ſubſiſtence, kept me long awake notwithſtanding my fatigue. At length my ſpirits being quite exhauſted, I fell aſleep, and when I awoke I found it near eleven o'clock. I aroſe, impatient to enquire how Manon had paſſed the night; when, on my ſummoning the ſervants, they told me that about ten o'clock her brother had called, and taken her out in a fiacre. Though I was not much pleaſed with this party, and the myſterious manner of her going, I made an effort to check my ſuſpicions. I took up a book, and paſſed an hour and more with a forced patience: but diſquiet and uneaſineſs got the better of me; I could ſit ſtill no longer; and going to the window, I watched every coach, in hopes of ſeeing it ſtop; and liſtened to every ſound: then ſickening with anxiety, I began haſtily to traverſe the apartment, conſidering whether I ſhould go out in ſearch of her, tho' I knew

not

not where to go. At length, as I walked with uneaſy ſteps by her toilet, I ſaw a letter lying among the boxes and things ſhe had left there: I ſnatched it up: it was her hand, addreſſed to me. Trembling with impatience, I tore it open and read theſe words:

"I ſolemnly proteſt to you, my dear "Chevalier, that you are the only be-"loved of my heart; and that it is you "only I am capable of loving. But "alas! my dear Des Grieux! in the ſitua-"tion to which we are reduced, fidelity "would be a ridiculous virtue. Love "will fly from want, and amidſt hunger "and poverty I ſhould forget to adore "you, and deplore the unhappy deſtiny "that united us. I love you better than "life, while I quit you; I only entreat "that you will leave the management of "our fortune for a little time to me, and

"woe

" woe be to thoſe who are entangled in " the ſnare I ſet for them. I go to em- " ploy myſelf in making thee, my Che- " valier, rich and happy. My brother " will acquaint you of the preſent ſituation " of your Manon, to whom the cruel " neceſſity of this parting has coſt many " tears."

After having read this extraordinary letter, I remained in a ſtate of mind hard to be deſcribed. Grief, rage, jealouſy and ſhame, contended with equal violence in my diſtracted boſom. Ah! it had been happy for me, if love had not yet had a greater influence there, and predominated even in the chaos of painful ſenſations. She loves me! cried I; ſhe dares aſſure me of it; yet ſhe abandons me without pity. I, who have ſacrificed every thing for her, who have denied myſelf the neceſſaries of life to gratify her

her caprices, after having left the boſom of an honorable family, to throw myſelf on her account into indigence and contempt. She dreads poverty! groſs and mean apprehenſion! Did I fear it, when for her I reſigned my fortune, my credit, my friends! every future hope and preſent connection! Yet ſhe talks of the pain of parting! Ah! who knows ſo well as I do, that if ſhe really felt that pain, ſhe would brave every diſtreſs rather than experience it.

My full heart was thus venting its anguiſh in vain exclamations, when I was interrupted by the unexpected appearance of L'Eſcaut. Wretch! cried I, laying my hand on myſword, where is Manon? whither have you carried her? My voice and action alarmed him. He anſwered, that if ſuch was his reception when he came to inform me of the ſervice he had done me, he would retire,

and

and never trouble me again. I locked the door upon him; then turning fiercely towards him, bid him not hope to make me again his dupe, and deceive me by chimeras. Either defend yourſelf, Monſieur L'Eſcaut, ſaid I, or inform me inſtantly where I can find your ſiſter. Good God! returned he, you are ſo haſty it is impoſſible to tell how to deal with you. I came not only to tell you where ſhe is, but to acquaint you with the good fortune that awaits you. I deſired an immediate explanation. He told me that Manon being unable to bear the thoughts of indigence, either for herſelf or me, had deſired him to introduce her to the acquaintance of Monſieur Gevres de Malleville; a generous man, and as rich as generous. He took care not to tell me that he had himſelf adviſed her to ſeek this acquaintance, and that the whole ſcheme was his own. I carried Manon thither.

this

this morning, continued L'Eſcaut, and Monſieur de Malleville was ſo charmed with her, that he immediately invited her to accompany him to his country houſe, for which he was juſt ſetting out, and where he will paſs ſome days. Foreſeeing, my dear Chevalier, how advantageous this connection might become for you, I took care to tell him that my ſiſter had met with great loſſes; and from the hints I gave him, he began by making her a preſent of two hundred piſtoles, which I affected to conſider as well enough for a beginning, but gave him to underſtand that in future ſhe would greatly need his friendſhip in pecuniary matters, having undertaken to provide for a younger brother, who on the death of our parents had been left wholly to her and to me; and that therefore if he found Manon worthy his protection, he would doubtleſs prevent her feeling any unhappineſs in the

the perſon of this orphan, whom ſhe conſidered as part of herſelf. Affected by this account, he has engaged to hire a commodious houſe for you and Manon; (for you may perceive it is yourſelf who is to perſonate the orphan brother:) this houſe he has engaged to furniſh properly; and to ſupport it he is to pay to Manon four hundred livres every month, which according to my reckoning, will at the end of the year amount to four thouſand eight hundred livres. On going into the country, he left directions with his intendant to look out an houſe, and prepare it againſt his return. There you may immediately afterwards ſee your Manon, who by me ſends you the kindeſt remembrances, and bade me tell you ſhe loves you more than ever.

The figure I made to myſelf when I began to conſider this arrangement, was ſuch

ſuch, that I knew not what to reply; and I ſat in uneaſy ſilence, reflecting on the ſtrange and ridiculous part I was to act, while L'Eſcaut aſked me a multitude of queſtions to which I gave no anſwer. My loſt honor and reputation now again aroſe before me like ſpectres, and ſtung me with remorſe. I turned my melancholy eyes towards Amiens,—towards the dear paternal houſe I had abandoned,—towards St. Sulpice, and every other ſpot where I once taſted, and might ſtill have enjoyed, felicity and content. Ah! how low was I now fallen! and how immenſe the diſtance between me and the honor and happineſs I had renounced! So great indeed did it appear to me, that as if it was impoſſible to regain what I had loſt, I ſeemed to have no other choice left than that of plunging into the gulph of infamy and deſperation which was opened to me.

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By what fatality, ſaid I to myſelf, am I reduced to be thus deſpicable and wretched? An invincible attachment to one charming object, the nobleſt and pureſt principle of the heart, is for me become a ſource of crimes and calamities. Had I, could I, at firſt have made Manon legitimately mine by marrying her, my father would ſoon have been reconciled, ſo tenderly did he then love me; nay he would with pleaſure have beheld in her, a wife not unworthy of his ſon; and I ſhould have enjoyed, with his affection, the fidelity of the loveliеſt of women, and affluence and content under his protection. Heavens! and what is my ſituation now? How mortifying the contraſt, and how infamous the compliance that is now required of me! To ſhare in, to be ſupported by the proſtitution of the woman I love?—but I muſt do ſo or leave her; and to leave her for ever is I feel yet more impoſſible.

Well,

Well then I muſt not heſitate: it is Manon who will have it ſo, and it is now too late for me to have any other will than her's. I held my hands over my eyes while I was thus arguing with myſelf, as if to hide from myſelf the precipice open at my feet; and without changing my poſture, I ſaid in a melancholy tone to L'Eſcaut, Well, Sir, if you meant to ſerve me by all this, I am I ſuppoſe obliged to you; tho' you might have befriended me much more by more honorable proceedures: but I conclude it is an affair ſettled, is it not? Well then nothing remains but to take advantage of your good offices, and enter into your views.

The rage I had expreſſed on his firſt entrance, followed by a long ſilence, had very much alarmed L'Eſcaut, of whom I had before remarked that courage was by no means his firſt virtue: he was therefore much

much pleaſed when he found I took a part ſo different from what he had apprehended. Oh, to be ſure! cried he, I meant only to ſerve you, and you will ſoon ſee how much the plan I have formed will turn out to your advantage. We then began to concert together how to obviate the ſuſpicions that Gevres de Malleville might entertain, when he ſaw me older and more formed than he might expect from the repreſentations of L'Eſcaut.

We concluded it would be proper for me to aſſume the air of a ſimple country boy; and that we ſhould pretend I was deſigned for a prieſt, and attended the College daily to qualify myſelf for that profeſſion. It was alſo agreed that I ſhould be ill and awkardly dreſſed, the firſt time I was admitted to his company; an opportunity for which interview now occurred. He returned to Paris with

Manon,

Manon, whom he placed in the houſe his intendant had provided. She ſent notice of her arrival to her brother. We went thither together, and found her old lover abſent.

Though I had agreed to ſubmit to this odious arrangement, my heart inceſſantly revolted againſt it. I met Manon with a mournful and uneaſy countenance; and the joy of ſeeing her again was empoiſoned by the thoughts of this ſecond infidelity. She, on the contrary, appeared tranſported with pleaſure at the ſight of me, and reproached me with the coldneſs and chagrin which was viſible in my manner. The words cruel and perfidious eſcaped me, which at firſt ſhe endeavoured to laugh off; but ſeeing that my eyes filled with tears, continued fixed on her's with looks that upbraided her faithleſs conduct, and that I could not reconcile

cile myſelf to a way of life ſo contrary to my feeling, and ſo deſtructive to my love, ſhe aroſe, and haſtily retired to her cloſet. I followed her, and found her drowned in tears, of which I enquired the cauſe. How ſhall I live, ſaid ſhe, if I am to ſee you unhappy? Since we met, you have have hardly deigned to ſpeak to me: you receive my careſſes with coldneſs and ill humour, and you are going to forget to love me.

Hear me, Manon, anſwered I. My heart I own is torn in pieces. I ſpeak not of the alarm into which your abrupt departure, after having paſſed the night in another apartment, occaſioned me; but do you believe that I am ſo loſt to all ſenſe of my own honor, as to be eaſily reconciled to the abandoned life you would have me lead? What a character am I to perſonate? How mean and degrading the ſituation to which

which you would reduce me? I will ſay nothing of my family and my honor; both are now nothing to me: but how inconſiſtent is the life you would have me lead, with the warmeſt and tendereſt paſſion that ever poſſeſſed the human heart. Yet you ſacrifice me, you leave me, and —— Hold, Chevalier! cried ſhe, interrupting me; theſe reproaches are uſeleſs; they pierce my heart, and cannot mend our fortune. I ſee what hurts you, and I relinquiſh my ſcheme, ſince it cannot be executed without making you miſerable. Leave me only time to receive the preſents that my old gallant is to bring me this evening, and I promiſe you to quit him directly. He has hitherto nothing to boaſt of, unleſs of having kiſſed my hands an hundred times; it is but reaſonable he ſhould pay for that favor; and conſidering his age and his riches, the pearl necklace and other preſents he has

promiſed me, together with half the annual penſion, which he is to bring this evening, is not at all too much. I was much better pleaſed at the diſpoſition ſhe ſhewed to quit her antiquated lover than at the advantage ſhe propoſed to make of him. We called in L'Eſcaut to inform him of our determination, at which he failed not to murmur: but the thoughts of five or ſix thouſand livres in ready money, which he hoped to divide with us immediately, reconciled him to the project; and after a few objections, he conſented to all his ſiſter propoſed; which was, that we ſhould ſup together with the old gentleman, for two reaſons; one was, that ſhe might enjoy the ridiculous ſcene which my pretended ſimplicity would produce; and the other, that the old libertine might not be alone with her. We agreed, that after ſupper L'Eſcaut and I would retire, and that when De Malleville

Malleville went to his apartment, Manon, inſtead of following him, ſhould rejoin us in a coach in which we were to wait for her.

The hour of ſupper arrived, and De Malleville did not make us wait for him. L'Eſcaut and his ſiſter received him in the parlour, where the firſt compliment ſhe received from her enamoured ſwain, was a necklace, ear rings, and bracelets of fine pearl, worth above a thouſand crowns. He then counted out to her, in ſhining Louis d'ors, the ſum of four thouſand four hundred livres, which was the moiety of the penſion he had agreed to allow her yearly. He ſeaſoned his preſent with an infinite number of compliments in the taſte of the laſt age; and Manon could not refuſe him a few kiſſes, which ſeemed to give her a kind of right to the gifts

ſhe was receiving, for which ſhe never intended to make any other return.

As ſoon as Manon had diſpoſed of her acquiſitions in her cloſet, L'Eſcaut came to introduce me to De Malleville; and gravely leading me by the hand towards him, bid me make a bow. I took care to make one down to the ground, with the air of a boy who learns to dance. Excuſe his awkwardneſs, Monſieur, ſaid L'Eſcaut, he has yet ſeen nothing of the world, and has, as you ſee, not profited by the air of Paris the little while he has been in it; but time and obſervation will make him quite another thing: then turning to me, you will have, continued he, the advantage of often ſeeing Monſieur Gevres de Malleville, to whom I have now the honor to introduce you: you muſt endeavour to form yourſelf on ſo excellent a model. The antient beau ſeemed not at all to ſuſpect the

the game we were playing; but believing me to be the raw boy I perſonated, ſeemed pleaſed with my ſimplicity, and tapping me on the cheek, told me I was a pretty lad, and he hoped I ſhould take care of myſelf at Paris, which was a bad place for young people. L'Eſcaut aſſured him I was naturally ſo grave and ſteady, that I thought of nothing but becoming a prieſt. I think him like Manon, ſaid De Malleville; he has very much her air. Oh dear! yes Sir, anſwered I, my ſiſter Manon and I are reckoned very much alike, and no wonder, ſince we are ſo nearly related, and I aſſure you I love my ſiſter Manon like another ſelf.

All our converſation was nearly in this ſtile: and Manon, who was the moſt determined gigler I ever knew, was ſeveral times on the point of ſpoiling all by burſting into fits of laughter, which when ſhe

could not wholly conquer ſhe endeavoured to excuſe; and the old man was too much taken up with her beauty, to criticiſe her behaviour very narrowly.

When it was time to retire, L'Eſcaut and I took our leave, and De Malleville went to his chamber; but Manon, leaving him for a moment on ſome pretext which ſhe eaſily found, ran down to us before we left the door, which we opened ſilently, and then walked to a coach which waited for us a few doors below, into which we got with all poſſible expedition, and in a few moments were in a diſtant quarter of the town.

Tho' in my eyes this appeared no other than an actual robbery, I did not think it the moſt ſcandalous action of which I had ever been guilty: the money I had acquired at play ſeemed to me much

much more unworthily gained. But we were equally unhappy in both; and Providence determined that neither the one nor the other ſhould procure us any durable advantage.

Gevres de Malleville ſoon diſcovered how we had duped him. I know not what meaſures he took that evening to find our retreat; but he had too much credit and power to permit us to eſcape him long; while we, truſting to the immenſity of the town, and the diſtance we were at from the quarter he inhabited, believed ourſelves in the moſt perfect ſecurity. He was however ſoon informed where we were; and not only ſo, but he learned who I was, the life I had led at Paris, the connection of Manon with De Beaumanoir, and the manner in which ſhe had quitted him; in a word, all the ſcandalous part of our hiſtory: and he

thereupon took the reſolution of having us arreſted, and treated like ſharpers and cheats.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning, but we were ſtill in bed, when an Exempt of the Police, and a party of the Marechauſſeé came into our chamber. They ſeized immediately on a caſket that contained our money, or rather the money and preſents of De Malleville; and having made us riſe, and dreſs ourſelves with the utmoſt haſte, they conducted us to two coaches which were in waiting. Into one of them they put Manon, and me into the other; and without any apologies drove me to St. Lazare.

Thoſe only who have experienced a ſudden and dreadful reverſe of fortune, can judge of my diſtraction and deſpair! I was

I was torn from Manon, to all appearance for ever; and our guards had the inhumanity to refuſe me leave to embrace and ſpeak a few words to her before they dragged her away. With equal cruelty, they were obſtinately ſilent as to whither I was going, or whither ſhe was carried: and probably it was happy I was ignorant of it; for had I then known the terrible fate that awaited her, I believe it would have deprived me of my reaſon, if not of my life.

My beloved Manon then was thus ſnatched from me, and carried to a place which I cannot name without horror even at this diſtance of time. She, who would have been miſtreſs of the world if all men had had my eyes and my heart, was ſhut up in a dreary cell, alone, where ſhe was every day to fulfil a certain taſk of coarſe work, on which condition only ſhe

was to receive a ſmall portion of diſguſting food. But of all this I was long ignorant; while I endured myſelf many months of cloſe and vigorous impriſonment.

The place of my deſtination I knew not till I ſaw myſelf at the gate of St. Lazare; and at that moment death would have been preferable to my feelings. I had conceived dreadful ideas of the place; and the horror with which it inſpired me, augmented when the guard again ſearched my pockets to aſſure themſelves I carried no offenſive weapon. The Superior, who had been apprized of my arrival, appeared to receive me. Father, cried I, no indignity: I will loſe my life rather than ſuffer the ſlighteſt to be offered me. No, Sir, anſwered the father, none are intended: you will act reaſonably, and we ſhall be well ſatisfied with each

each other. He then desired me to follow him up stairs, which I did without resistance; the guard still following till we came to an upper chamber, when the Superior made them a sign to retire.

As soon as the door was shut upon us, I addressed myself to him. Well, Sir, I am your prisoner; what do you intend to do with me? He answered that he was happy to hear me speak calmly: that it was his inclination as well as his duty, to endeavour at least to reinspire me with those sentiments of religion and rectitude, which the heat of youth, and eager pursuit of pleasure, had made me forget; and that he did not doubt, but that by a little attention to his advice and exhortations, I should soon be restored to my reason, and find even that solitude capable of bestowing pleasure and —— I hastily interrupted him: talk not to me, father, cried

cried I, of pleaſure; you know not that the only happineſs I am capable of taſting is torn from me. Oh, you are miſtaken, returned the father, in his turn interrupting me: I know your preſent attachment; but reaſon will recover its empire over a young man, well born, and well diſpoſed. This anſwer made me apprehend he was acquainted with my whole hiſtory, and perhaps my name and family. I deſired to know how far his knowledge of my affairs went? He told me he knew all.

This ſtroke was the crueleſt I had yet ſuffered. A ſhower of tears fell from my eyes, and the moſt frightful deſpair took poſſeſſion of my heart. The thoughts of becoming the ridicule of my acquaintance, and the diſgrace of my family, covered me with ſhame and confuſion; and

and I paſſed eight days in a ſtate of depreſſion, or rather of deſpair bordering on madneſs; being incapable of attending to any thing but the opprobium and infamy with which this impriſonment covered me. Even love itſelf loſt a part of its influence; and I thought leſs of Manon than of the debaſement I ſuffered by her means. Grief, confuſion, and regret were the reigning paſſions of my ſoul, and abſorbed for a time every other ſentiment. The deep melancholy in which theſe cruel reflections plunged me, intereſted the Superior in my favor: he even began to apprehend fatal conſequences, and thought it neceſſary to treat me with gentleneſs and indulgence. He viſited me ſeveral times every day; and took me often with him into the garden, where he gave ſcope to his zeal, and ſpared not pious exhortations and advice, which I received with ſo much mildneſs, that he conceived the utmoſt hopes of my reformation.

Your natural diſpoſition, ſaid he, appears to me to be ſo gentle and good, that I cannot comprehend how you have been drawn into the vices and diſorders of which you are accuſed. It is aſtoniſhing to me, that with ſuch a temper you ſhould have given yourſelf up to a courſe of life ſo licentious. It is ſtill more aſtoniſhing, that having once been involved in it, and reſcued only by force, you ſhould ſo willingly attend to the advice and inſtructions I give you. If this is the effect of repentance, you are a ſignal inſtance of the mercy of God; if it is owing to your diſpoſition, I have every reaſon to hope, that with ſuch advantages we ſhall not have occaſion to keep you here long, before you will reaſſume your former regular morals, and be reſtored to your family and your reſpectability. I was delighted to find the good father had this opinion of me. I determined to augment his confidence by a

behaviour

behaviour conformable to the idea he ſeemed to have formed of my character; which appeared the only means to ſhorten my impriſonment.

I aſked for books; and he was ſurpriſed, when he gave me the choice of ſeveral, that I fixed on the moſt ſerious; and I affected to devote myſelf to the ſtudy of them with the moſt earneſt attention: thus by every means endeavouring to confirm him in the opinion of my repentance.

All this however was but pretence: with ſhame I acknowledge that I ſtudied the moſt refined hypocriſy. But the melancholy hours in which I was alone, I paſſed not in reading, but in lamenting my cruel deſtiny, and curſing my confinement and thoſe through whoſe means I was confined. When the firſt ſhock at finding myſelf known was over, love re-aſſumed its empire:

pire: the lovely figure of Manon again haunted me, and the uncertainty of her fate unceaſingly tormented me. Sometimes I fancied ſhe was become the miſtreſs of Gevres de Malleville; for I was far from ſuppoſing he had treated her as rigorouſly as he had done me, but believed that he had put me into priſon only to ſecure her to himſelf. Days and nights paſſed, which theſe mortifying ideas made appear inſupportably long; but having no other hopes of eſcaping but by means of the Superior, I ſtudied his looks and manner towards me with the moſt watchful attention, and found that I daily gained on his eſteem; and I redoubled my endeavours to encreaſe this favorable diſpoſition, conſidering him as the arbitrator of my deſtiny.

I ſoon had the pleaſure of finding myſelf entirely eſtabliſhed in his affection; and

and being then convinced he was every way diſpoſed to ſerve me, I one day took occaſion to aſk him if my enlargement depended on him. He anſwered, that tho' the power was not abſolutely his, yet he hoped and believed, that on the favorable report of my conduct during my confinement, Monſieur Gevres de Malleville, at whoſe inſtance the Lieutenant of the Police had confined me, would conſent to my releaſe. May I not hope, aſked I, mildly, that two months cloſe impriſonment will appear to Monſieur de Malleville a ſufficient expiation of the offence I have given him? The Superior replied, that if I deſired it he would try what was to be done; and I ſo preſſingly entreated him to undertake this good office, that he conſented to ſet about it immediately. Two days afterwards he informed me, that his repreſentations had ſuch effect on Monſieur Gevres de Malleville, that he

he not only ſeemed diſpoſed to reſtore me [redacted]erty, but had even expreſſed an in-[redacted]ion to be better acquainted with me, and propoſed viſiting me in my confinement. Tho' I did not much enjoy the thoughts of this interview, I was rejoiced at the general tenor of the good father's report.

De Malleville in a day or two afterwards came to St. Lazare, and was brought into my room by the Superior, who then left us alone. His manner did not now appear ſo ridiculous as when I ſaw him before at the fatal ſupper which coſt me ſo dear. He talked to me ſenſibly enough on the diſorderly life into which I had been drawn; and I ſuppoſe by way of juſtifying himſelf for his own looſe conduct, ſaid that tho' ſome indulgencies were permitted to the frailty of human nature, yet that cheating and deceit, for which

which there could be no excuſe, were of ſuch evil tendency, and ſo inimical to ſociety, that they could not be too ſeverely puniſhed. He ſeemed ſatisfied with the attention with which I liſtened to him; and I continued to bear with patience his raillery on my relationſhip to Manon, and on the little chapelles which we had told him I took ſuch pleaſure in making, and of which he ſaid I had certainly made a great number at St. Lazare.

Had he ſtopped here all had been well; but he went on to ſay, that undoubtedly Manon had alſo had abundance of time for the ſame pious employment at the hoſpital.* Tho' my blood curdled in my veins at the word hoſpital, I had

* L'hopital General, St. Pelagio, les Filles Repenti, and other houſes at Paris, are deſtined for the reception of women of diſſolute character.

yet

yet ſo much preſence of mind as to deſire an explanation. An explanation! Oh ho! cried he; what, you do not know then, that ſhe has been in the hoſpital theſe two months, where doubtleſs ſhe has edified as much as you have done at St. Lazare.

Had I been at that moment aſſured of eternal impriſonment, or had death itſelf in its moſt horrid form been before my eyes, I could not have conquered the violent emotion that poſſeſſed me at theſe words. I threw myſelf upon him in a tranſport of rage that deprived me of half my ſtrength; but I had enough to throw him to the ground, where I knelt over him; and he was very near being ſtrangled, when the noiſe of his fall, and outcries which I had hardly left him breath to make, brought the Superior and ſeveral monks into the room; and they delivered him from my fury with leſs difficulty,

as

his paſſion had deprived me of my breath and my ſenſes. Oh eternal juſtice of Heaven! cried I, ſhall I live a moment after ſo infamous an event? Again I flew at the inhuman monſter, who had done worſe than aſſaſſinate me; but they prevented my ſeizing him, and kept us aſunder; while the frenzy of my paſſion exceeded all imagination.

An agony of rage ſo violent, the occaſion of which was quite unknown to them, appeared ſo extraordinary, that they continued looking in amaze at each other. While De Malleville was adjuſting his wig and cravat, and full of terror and vexation at having been ſo ill treated, he ordered the Superior to confine me more rigorouſly than ever, and to puniſh me with the diſcipline given to the moſt refractory inhabitants of their houſe. No, Sir, replied the Superior, it is not in that manner

manner we can think of conducting ourſelves towards a perſon of ſuch high birth as the Chevalier des Grieux: he is ſo properly behaved, and of manners ſo gentle, that it muſt be ſomething very unuſual that has driven him to this extremity with you. This anſwer entirely diſconcerted De Malleville, who went haſtily away, muttering that he knew how to make both the Superior and the Chevalier des Grieux ſubmit to his power. The Monks followed him out; and the Superior being left alone with me, conjured me to tell him immediately the occaſion of this unaccountable ſcene.

Oh, Father! cried I, weeping like a child, conceive the moſt execrable cruelty! imagine the moſt inhuman outrage! and you will ſtill be unable to gueſs at any thing ſo infamous as the injury I have received from that old villain. My heart is

torn

torn in pieces: I ſhall never recover it. I will tell you all: you are good and will pity me. I then gave him a ſummary detail of my long and unconquerable paſſion for Manon; the flouriſhing ſtate of our fortune when we were robbed by our ſervants; the offers De Malleville had made to my miſtreſs, together with the unfortunate manner in which his amour had ended.

Tho' I kept to the general line of facts, I own I threw the moſt favorable light I could on the parts we had acted. You ſee, father, ſaid I, the ſource of that extraordinary zeal which De Malleville has ſhewn for my reformation; and he has had intereſt enough to have us ſhut up to gratify his revenge. I forgive him the injuries done to my own perſon; but my Manon! the deareſt part of myſelf! her whom I adore, in the hoſpital! to hear that

that he has put her there, like the moſt abandoned and incorrigible of women! oh! it is too much! where ſhall I find ſtrength of mind to ſupport myſelf under the ſhame and vexation that overwhelms me!

The good father ſeeing me thus in deſpair, undertook to conſole me. He told me he never underſtood my adventure in the manner I now related it: that he knew I had lived in a diſorderly manner; but always imagined that ſome attachment to my family, or intimacy with my father, had engaged Monſieur de Malleville to take part in my affairs; nay, that De Malleville himſelf had ſo explained it to him. But that as what I now told him very much altered the caſe, he did not doubt but that the account he would go and give of it to the Lieutenant of the Police, would immediately procure me my liberty.

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The father then aſked me, why ſince my family had not occaſioned my confinement, I had not informed them of my ſituation, and ſolicited their interference to procure my releaſe? I anſwered that I had been prevented by the vexation ſuch a diſgraceful circumſtance would give my father, and the reproaches it would draw upon me from all my connections. At the cloſe of our converſation, he promiſed to go inſtantly to the Lieutenant of the Police, if it be only, ſaid he, to prevent ſomething yet more malicious from Gevres de Malleville, who went from hence in a very ill humour, and who has intereſt enough to be a very dangerous enemy. I waited his return in the ſtate of mind of a criminal who expects his ſentence. The idea of Manon at the hoſpital, brought with it a thouſand daggers to my ſoul: the accounts I had heard of that dreadful abode occurred to me in all its horrors, and threw me into

an agony of mind not to be deſcribed. So determined was I to relieve her, that had no other means offered of getting out of St. Lazare, I ſhould certainly have fired the building rather than have been longer confined in it. Then I ran over in my mind every poſſibility of eſcape, if the Lieutenant of the Police ſhould refuſe to ſet me free; and after canvaſſing many different places, ſaw none on which I could certainly depend: while I felt too certainly, that to attempt it and fail would make my captivity yet ſtricter.

I thought of every friend on whom I could depend for aſſiſtance; but how inform them of my ſituation? At length I believed I had found one expedient that gave a ray of hope: but before I had time to digeſt my plan the Superior returned, and in his countenance I read that his embaſſy had been ſucceſsleſs. I have

have ſpoken, ſaid he, to the Lieutenant of the Police, but my application was too late: De Malleville had prepoſſeſſed him ſo ſtrongly againſt you, that he was on the point of ſending me orders to confine you more ſtrictly, and to ſubject you to harſher methods; but when I related to him the true ſtate of your caſe, he ſeemed very much ſoftened; and ſmiling at the libertiniſm of old De Malleville, he told me that tho' your offence was much leſſened in his opinion by this explanation, yet you muſt notwithſtanding ſubmit to ſix months longer impriſonment; in which, added he, I more willingly conſent to gratify Monſieur de Malleville, as ſuch a penance cannot fail of having a ſalutary effect on the morals of the Chevalier des Grieux. He ordered me, however, to treat you with decency and good manners, of which I aſſured

him you ſhould have no reaſon to complain.

While the good father was ſpeaking, I had time to conſider that I ſhould only expoſe myſelf to the hazard of failing in my deſign, if I expreſſed too violent a deſire for my enlargement. I therefore, with all the tranquility I could aſſume, anſwered, that it was a great alleviation of my misfortune to find I poſſeſſed his friendſhip; conſoled with which, I muſt ſubmit as patiently as I could to a longer reſidence at St. Lazare; but that another circumſtance in which it was in his power to indulge me, would aſſiſt in ſoftening the hardſhip of confinement, which was, that he would inform a worthy friend of mine, an eccleſiaſtic of St. Sulpice, where I was, and permit him ſometimes to viſit me. This favor the father granted without heſitation, and I need not tell you it

was

was my friend Tiberge that I meant: not that I hoped through his immediate aſſiſtance to procure my liberty, but I intended uſing him as the remote inſtrument of my deſign, without even his own knowledge.

My project was to write to L'Eſcaut, and engage our common friends in my reſcue. The firſt difficulty was to convey my letter to him. Tiberge I was ſure would undertake to deliver nothing to the brother of Manon; therefore I contrived to put my letter to him into another which I directed to a very creditable tradeſman whom I knew; and this I thought Tiberge would carry for me without ſcruple. As it was abſolutely neceſſary for me to ſee L'Eſcaut, I deſired him to come to St. Lazare, and enquire for me, in the name of my elder brother, who might with probability be

ſuppoſed to have come to Paris, on hearing of my ſituation. The Superior informed Tiberge of my deſire to ſee him, and he came immediately. This valuable friend had not loſt ſight of me: he knew my laſt adventure, and that I was at St. Lazare; and he was not ſorry for a diſgrace that he hoped would be the means of reſtoring me to reaſon.

Our converſation was held in the moſt perfect friendſhip. He wiſhed to know the ſituation of my mind, and I opened myſelf to him without reſerve on every thing except my deſign of eſcaping. 'Tis not to your eyes, my dear Tiberge, ſaid I, that I ſhall endeavour to appear what I am not. If you hoped to find your friend cured of his love, and forgetting the charms of his Manon, you judge too favorably: you ſee me ſuch as I left you four

four months ſince; always paſſionately in love, and always unhappy thro' the exceſs of that fatal tenderneſs in which I place my happineſs. He anſwered, that the infatuation under which I ſuffered my reaſon to be anihilated, was inexcuſable: that tho' inſtances were not uncommon, of ſinners, who, intoxicated with the falſe pleaſures of vice, openly preferred them to thoſe of virtue, ſtill it was happineſs they were attached to, however fallacious their idea of it, and they were at leaſt the dupes of illuſion; but to be convinced, as I was, that the object of my attachment was fit only to make me guilty and miſerable, and yet with my eyes open to precipitate myſelf into the gulph of crimes and misfortunes, was ſuch a contradiction to common ſenſe, as would diſgrace the moſt inferior underſtanding.

him aſſume, that what I ſaid was not only contrary to common ſenſe, but was a wretched piece of ſophiſtry, full of impiety and irreligion. The compariſon, ſaid he, which you affect to make between the calamities into which an irregular and diſorderly paſſion has plunged you, and thoſe which religious and pious perſons have endured on account of their faith, is an abſurd and an impious idea.

I own, anſwered I, that the caſes may not bear a very exact compariſon; but take care; it is not on that I lay the weight of my argument. My deſign was to prove that there is nothing in my attachment contradictory to common ſenſe; for you will allow, that tho' my happineſs may be improperly placed, my conduct tends to obtain it; and if there is any abſurdity in braving pain and danger to gain a favourite point, you at leaſt are a ſharer

in

in the abſurdity. 'Tis in that light only I ſpeak of our different purſuits as on the ſame footing, and I ſtill inſiſt that they are ſo. Do you aſſert that the rewards which virtue beſtows are infinitely ſuperior to thoſe of love? who ſhall contradict you? But is it of that we are talking? No! I ſpeak of the power which we have to ſupport in either caſe, pain and ſuffering. We can judge only by experience: how many apoſtates are there from virtue; how few from true love. You will perhaps on your part alledge, that tho' there is ſometimes a great degree of pain, ſelf-denial, and uneaſineſs attends the practice of virtue, yet it is not always ſo: that the pious are no longer expoſed to the danger of being martyrs to their religious principles, and that many virtuous perſons live in the utmoſt tranquility and content. To which I reply, that neither does love always render his votaries

votaries unhappy ; but that there are thoſe who enjoy all the gifts of fortune together with his faireſt favors, which to ſuſceptible minds includes the greateſt of ſublunary bleſſings.

The concluſion of my diſcourſe reſtored Tiberge's good humour. He allowed that my argument had ſomething like reaſon in it ; but again he objected to my ſyſtem, by ſaying, ſince you muſt long ſince have ſeen that Mademoiſelle Manon does not conſtitute your felicity, but occaſions you to ſuffer remorſe, diſappointment, and diſgrace, why not, ſince you ſay that any degree of pain may be borne for an adequate recompenſe, why not by one great effort diſengage yourſelf from her, in hopes of acquiring by it a right to that felicity which you acknowledge you believe may exceed the happineſs you propoſe with her. Ah ! my dear friend ! replied I, it is there

I feel

I feel my deplorable weakneſs: I ſee how I ſhould act, but where ſhall I find ſtrength to do it? what reaſon, what rhetoric will make me forget the charms of Manon? God forgive me! cried Tiberge, I believe I am talking to a Janſeniſt. I know not what I am, returned I; I hardly know what I ought to be; but I feel but too ſenſibly the force of their ſyſtem.

This converſation ſerved to awaken in the breaſt of Tiberge all his former pity. He found more weakneſs than obſtinacy in my unhappy conduct; and his kindneſs now returning with all its uſual warmth, diſpoſed him in the ſequel to afford me that ſhare of affectionate attention, without which I muſt have periſhed in the utmoſt miſery.

I did not dare diſcover to him the leaſt ſymptom of an inclination to eſcape from St. Lazare;

St. Lazare; but gave him the letter I had already written and ſealed, deſiring him to deliver it to the perſon to whom it was directed, to whom I eaſily found a pretence for writing. He carried it punctually; and before evening L'Eſcaut had received that which was incloſed, directed to him. The next day he appeared at the gate; and ſaying, as I had directed, that he was my elder brother, was admitted to my room. I ſaw him enter with extreme joy. Let us not loſe a moment, ſaid I as I ſecured the door; tell me firſt what you know of Manon, and then adviſe with me on the means of regaining my freedom.

He aſſured me he had not ſeen his ſiſter ſince the evening he parted from us together after our flight from Gevres de Malleville, and that it was not till after long enquiries he had diſcovered her fate and mine; but that as ſoon as he knew ſhe

was

was at the hoſpital, he had applied there repeatedly for leave to ſee her, which had been conſtantly and peremptorily denied him. In regard to your deliverance, continued L'Eſcaut, it is much leſs eaſy than you may ſuppoſe. Morizet, Flamarens, and myſelf, paſſed the evening of yeſterday in examining the outward walls of your priſon; and we fear, that as your apartment looks into a court ſurrounded by other buildings, and is beſides on the third ſtair caſe, it will be difficult, if not impoſſible to get you from thence by any attempt we could make from without. You muſt imagine ſome expedient from within.

'Tis impracticable, anſwered I: I have examined every thing ſince I have been indulged by the Superior with the liberty of walking in the galleries, and am not locked into my room. All the ſtaircaſes

are

are ſecured by thick doors, which are carefully ſhut night and day, with ſuch ſtrength and precaution, that to eſcape ſeems almoſt impoſſible. But ſtay; a ſudden thoughts ſtrikes me: could you not bring me a piſtol, ſince you paſs the porters unſearched and unſuſpected. Nothing more eaſy, replied L'Eſcaut, but who would you kill? I have ſo little intention to kill any one, ſaid I, that the piſtol need not even be loaded. Bring it to-morrow, and fail not to be, with our two friends, oppoſite the door of St. Lazare between ten and eleven to-morrow night: I think I ſhall be able to join you.

He preſſed me to tell him how I intended to proceed; but I anſwered that ſuch an enterprize could only appear well imagined after it had ſucceeded. I then deſired him to ſhorten his viſit, to avoid

all

all ſuſpicion, and that he might find no difficulty in being admitted the next day. They accordingly ſuffered him to enter the ſecond time as eaſily as the firſt. His air was grave and compoſed, and nobody would have ſuppoſed from his appearance he was otherwiſe than an honeſt man.

As ſoon as I was furniſhed with the inſtrument with which I hoped to effectuate my releaſe, I hardly doubted of ſucceſs. The enterprize was hazardous and daring; but of what was I not capable, animated by motives ſo powerful. Since I was permitted to walk in the galleries, I had obſerved, that every evening the porter, after having locked all the doors, carried the keys to the Superior; ſoon after which a profound ſilence reigned in the houſe, which evinced that every body was retired to reſt. There was a ſtone paſſage which led from my room to that where the Superior

perior lay: my reſolution was to force his keys from him by threats, and to open the doors and go into the ſtreet: and having thus determined I waited for night.

A little paſt nine o'clock the porter came as uſual with the keys: I then remained quiet another hour, 'till the deep ſilence of the houſe perſuaded me the monks and ſervants were aſleep; then ſoftly opening my door, I went ſlowly along the paſſage, with my candle in one hand and the piſtol in the other, and tapped gently at the door of the Superior's room, to awaken him with as little noiſe as poſſible. The ſecond time I rapped he heard me; and ſuppoſing that ſome monk was ill, and wanted aſſiſtance, he got up to open it. He had however the precaution to aſk who it was, and what was wanted? I anſwered in a plaintive tone, and like one in pain, that it was I. Ha! is it you,

my

my ſon? ſaid the good man, opening the door: what brings you here ſo late? I went in; and going to the other end of the room with him, I declared to him in a few words that I would remain no longer at St. Lazare: the night, father, is a convenient time for me to eſcape, and I expect of your friendſhip either that you will open the doors for me or give me the keys that I may open them for myſelf. This addreſs could not fail to ſtagger him: he looked at me with ſurpriſe: but as I had no time to loſe, I told him that tho' I was ſenſible of all his friendſhip, yet liberty being the moſt precious of all bleſſings, and what I was moſt unjuſtly deprived of, I was determined at all hazards to regain it; and leaſt he ſhould raiſe his voice for help, I ſhewed him under my waiſtcoat an infallible argument in favor of ſilence. How! my ſon, exclaimed he, ſtarting at ſight of the piſtol, would you kill me then

in

in return for all the kindneſs I have ſhewn you? God forbid! my good father! anſwered I; you will not drive me to ſuch a fatal extremity: but I will, I muſt be free; and am ſo determined to attempt it at all riſques, that if I fail thro' your means I cannot anſwer for the conſequence of my rage and deſpair. But my dear ſon, ſaid he again, all pale and trembling, what have I done? why ſhould you wiſh my death? No! no! I cried, with yet more impatience, I wiſh not your death, but to procure my liberty.—I will heſitate at nothing.—Don't force me to an act of deſperation.—Open the doors, and I am your ſincereſt friend. Then ſeeing the keys lay on a table near his bed, I eagerly ſeized them, and inſiſted upon his following me with as little noiſe as poſſible. When we got out of the room, I made him go before me, and open the firſt door on the ſtaircaſe: as he did it, he repeated, with a

ſigh,

ſigh, ah! my ſon! from you, who would have believed this? No noiſe, no noiſe, father, was all my anſwer.

At length we arrived at a ſort of barrier which is before the great door of the priſon, and I believed myſelf already free. I was behind the Superior, with my candle and my piſtol; but while he was unbarring the grated door, one of the porter's ſervants, who lay in a little room near it, was awakened by the noiſe, and put his head out at the door of his room to ſee what was the matter: the father embraced this opportunity to ſtop me, and unhappily called to the fellow to ſeize me. He was a ſtrong raſcal; and flew at me without heſitation. 'Twas now no time for deliberation: I fired my piſtol, and he fell. See, father, ſee what you have forced me to: but come, unbar the door inſtantly, ſaid I, ruſhing towards it. He dared not refuſe.

paſs, and the firſt outcry occaſioned by your eſcape ſubſide, before you attempt to reſcue my ſiſter. This advice was undoubtedly prudent; but it agreed ill with my impetuous temper, and more impetuous paſſion. All I would promiſe was to paſs the next day in his apartment; where he ſhut me up; and I then went to bed, as I greatly wanted repoſe, and lay till late in the day.

As ſoon as I was refreſhed by ſleep, I began to conſider of the means of liberating Manon, whoſe priſon I knew was infinitely more difficult to eſcape from than mine had been. Force I knew would there be uſeleſs: artifice alone could ſucceed. But the Goddeſs of Invention herſelf would have been puzzled how to ſet about it. I knew ſo little how to begin, that I was obliged to poſtpone forming any plan till I could by ſome means inform myſelf

myſelf of the interior arrangement of the hoſpital.

As ſoon as returning night made my going out leſs unſafe, I deſired L'Eſcaut to accompany me to the hoſpital, where we entered into converſation with one of the porters, who ſeemed to be an intelligent fellow. I pretended to be a ſtranger who had heard much of the excellent regulations of the hoſpital, and I queſtioned him on the moſt minute particulars of its management, and led him from one queſtion to another till we began to diſcourſe of the governors, whoſe names and rank I deſired to be informed of. The anſwers he made gave me the glympſe of an idea that might, I thought, be brought to perfection. I aſked if any of the governors he had named had children? He ſaid that he did not know what family ſome of them had, but that Monſieur the Count de St.

Orfeuil had a ſon, Monſieur de Tiroux, who was about one or two and twenty, and had often been at the hoſpital with his father. This was enough: I broke off our converſation; and as we walked towards L'Eſcaut's lodgings I communicated to him the ſcheme I had formed.

I imagine, ſaid I, that Monſieur de Tiroux, rich and of high birth, is in a certain courſe of pleaſures like other young men of his age and ſituation. He does not, I imagine, diſlike the fair ſex, and will hardly refuſe his ſervice in a love affair: I mean to intereſt him in the liberation of Manon. If he is a man of generoſity and ſentiment, thoſe motives alone will engage him to aſſiſt me; but even if he is leſs nobly minded, he will at leaſt be moved by the melancholy ſituation of a beautiful young woman, and may be tempted to befriend her, if it be only in hopes

hopes of ſharing her favors. Therefore I will go to him to-morrow; and I feel ſo favorable a preſentiment of ſucceſs, that I am already much eaſier than I was. L'Eſcaut acknowledged my plan to be a good one, and that much might be expected from it; and conſoled with that flattering hope, I paſſed the night more eaſily than I had done the preceding one.

In the morning, I dreſſed myſelf as well as my preſent indigence would allow, and went in a fiacre to the houſe of Monſieur de Tiroux. I enquired for the young gentleman, who was at firſt rather ſurpriſed at being addreſſed by a perfect ſtranger: his countenance and manner were however ſuch as immediately perſuaded me I might truſt him, and I explained in a few words the requeſt I had to make; and to engage every motive in my favor, I deſcribed the beauty and merit of my miſtreſs ſuch as

could be only equalled by the violence of my paſſion for her. He told me that tho' he had never ſeen Mademoiſelle Manon, he had heard of her extraordinary attractions; at leaſt if it was the ſame who had been put into the hoſpital by Gevres de Malleville. I doubted not but that he was informed of the part I had taken in that affair; and to gain his confidence by mine, I recounted the whole exactly as it happened.

Now Sir, ſaid I, my life, and what is infinitely dearer to me, the intereſt of my love, is in your hands. I have no reſerves to you: not only becauſe I am aſſured you are of a noble nature, but becauſe the reſemblance of our ages makes me hope our inclinations may alſo be alike. He appeared affected with this inſtance of candour, and anſwered like a man who knew the world, as well as like one poſſeſſed of thoſe

thoſe ſentiments which the world ſeldom gives, but often takes away. He did not aſſure me he could reſtore Manon to me, becauſe at his age his power and influence could not be great; but he promiſed to procure me at leaſt a ſight of her, and to do his utmoſt to give her back to my arms. I was more ſatisfied with theſe moderate promiſes than if he had abſolutely aſſured me of ſucceſs: there was a modeſt diffidence of his own weight, mingled with his aſſurances of ſervice, which charmed me; and I began to hope every thing from his endeavours.

To give me an opportunity of ſeeing Manon was ſuch a favor as I thought the ſervices of my whole life too little to requite. I expreſſed to him what I felt on this occaſion in ſo lively a manner, as perſuaded him that ingratitude at leaſt was

not among my vices. We became immediately on a footing of friendſhip; without any other attraction than the natural tendency that one generous open hearted young man has to love another of the ſame diſpoſition. But my new friend carried his attention much farther than moſt men would have done on ſo ſhort an acquaintance: judging as I only ſo lately eſcaped from St. Lazare that my finances were not in a flouriſhing ſtate, he offered me his purſe, and even preſſed me to accept it. I refuſed it, but teſtified my ſincere gratitude. 'Tis too much, Sir! ſaid I; if with this uncommon goodneſs, you procure me the happineſs of ſeeing Manon once more, I ſhall be eternally attached to you; but if you reſtore to my longing boſom that lovely and beloved charmer, I ſhould think it too little to lay down my life in your ſervice.

Before

Before we parted we agreed on the time and place where we were to meet again. He had the goodneſs to delay it no longer than till the next afternoon. I waited for him in a coffee-houſe, where at the appointed time he joined me, and we went together to the hoſpital. My knees trembled, and my breath grew ſhort as I croſſed the court; ſo that it was with difficulty I ſupported myſelf. Shall I then, ſaid I, ſee again the idol of my ſoul; the object of ſo much inquietude; of ſo many tears! Grant me, oh heaven! ſtrength enough to ſee her once more, and I think I could die contented.

Monſieur de Tiroux addreſſed himſelf to the principals of the houſe, who with the moſt officious attention offered him all the civilities in their power. He named the young woman he wanted to ſee; and

they directed a ſervant to ſhew him the quarter where her chamber was, and to conduct him to it. This man, whoſe buſineſs it was to attend a certain number of rooms in one of the wards, walked before us, with a key of a frightful ſize in his hand. As we went along, I aſked him how the young perſon whom we were going to ſee had paſſed her time ſince ſhe had been in that diſmal place? He told us, that ſhe had ever been as gentle as an angel, and had never ſpoken a harſh or peeviſh word ſince he had ſerved her. That during the firſt ſix weeks, ſhe had wept continually, but for ſome time ſhe had appeared to be better reconciled to her deſtiny, and was employed at her work the whole day; and after fulfilling her taſk, ſhe read. I enquired if ſhe had been ſupplied with proper

proper proviſions, and he aſſured me that neceſſaries, at leaſt, ſhe had never wanted.

We were now within a few ſteps of her cell, and my heart beat ſo violently that I was obliged to ſtop. Conceiving from the ſenſations I felt myſelf, how violent her emotion might be if ſhe ſaw me ſuddenly, I deſired Monſieur de Tiroux to go in firſt, and prepare her for my arrival. He did ſo; and I remained at the door, where I heard him addreſs himſelf to her as one of my friends who was come to bring her news of me. At my name ſhe aroſe and enquired eagerly where I was, and how I did? He aſſured her that if ſhe deſired it he would bring me to her feet, as faithful, and as much in love as ever. Ah! when? cried ſhe. To-day! this moment! replied my friend: this happy inſtant need not be delayed.—Speak and he ſhall appear. She now compre-

hended that I was at the door; and we were inſtantly in each others arms. Let thoſe who have loved as I did, conceive the effuſions of tenderneſs which paſſed at this interview, after an abſence, and ſuch an abſence! of three months.—Sighs! exclamations! tears! and careſſes! with every endearing name that love inſpires, were our mutual language for a quarter of an hour, and formed a ſcene that affected Mr. de Tiroux extremely. I envy you, ſaid he, making us ſeat ourſelves: there is no deſtiny, however glorious and happy, that I would not reſign for the pleaſure of being ſo beloved; and I anſwered, I would reject being maſter of the world, if it were put in competition with the charming aſſurance of Manon's affection.

The reſt of our converſation was in the ſame ſtyle. My poor Manon told me her melancholy tale, and I related mine to her; while

while our paſt misfortunes, and thoſe with which we were ſtill ſurrounded, drew from us the bittereſt tears.

The good De Tiroux employed himſelf in conſoling us; and nothing did it ſo effectually as the promiſe he made us of exerting his utmoſt efforts to put an end to our ſufferings. He adviſed us not to continue together too long, that no ſuſpicion might ariſe to prevent our meeting again. But he found it difficult to make us reliſh this prudent advice: Manon could not determine to let me depart, but continued holding my hand and my coat. Ah! why do you leave me? ſaid ſhe: alas! who ſhall aſſure me I ſhall ſee you again? I do, anſwered de Tiroux; I promiſe to bring him again: and as to the place, it is no longer the hoſpital, an houſe of puniſhment and mortification; it is the court of Verſailles; the abode of beauty and ele-

gance; ſince it contains a perſon to whom all hearts muſt do homage.

I thought it would be proper to give ſomething to the ſervant who waited upon her, to engage him to ſerve her more attentively. It happened that this young man had a good heart, and more ſentiment than uſually belongs to his ſtation. The affecting interview he had been witneſs to, as well perhaps as the beauty and gentleneſs of Manon, intereſted him for her; and a Louis d'or which I gave him, compleated the prepoſſeſſion he had conceived in my favour.

Sir, ſaid he, taking me on one ſide, if you will promiſe to take me into your ſervice, or otherwiſe recompenſe me for the loſs of my place here, I believe I could find a way to put Mademoiſelle Manon into your hands. It may eaſily be ſuppoſed

poſed that I liſtened eagerly to this diſcourſe; and tho' I had nothing in fact that I could command, I promiſed him more than he aſked for: indeed I knew I could at any time ſufficiently repay ſuch a perſon for his ſervices, and therefore gave him without heſitation the moſt laviſh aſſurances of reward. I aſked him by what means he thought he could ſet Mademoiſelle Manon at liberty? By the moſt ſimple in the world, anſwered he: I ſhall let her out of her chamber, and conduct her to the ſtreet door, where you muſt be ready in a coach to receive her. I objected to this the hazard there would be in her croſſing the courts and galleries: he owned there would be ſome; but in theſe caſes, ſaid he, one muſt hazard ſomething, and I think in this the riſk is leſs than you ſeem to apprehend.

Charmed

Charmed with an hope ſo flattering, I communicated what the man had ſaid, to de Trioux, who had abſented himſelf a moment to ſpeak to a perſon in another part of the houſe: But he was not ſo ſanguine as I was: he allowed that there might be a bare poſſibility of her eſcaping by this means; but that on the other hand, the probabilities of failing were numerous; and if ſhe was detected in the attempt, ſhe muſt be loſt for ever. Beſides, continued he, if you ſhould ſucceed in getting her away, you muſt inſtantly quit Paris; for to conceal yourſelves will be impoſſible. A man alone may eaſily evade all ſearch, but with a woman ſo remarkably beautiful as Manon, it will be impoſſible to elude the ſtrict ſearch that will be made for you both.

However juſt this reaſoning was, the hope of recovering Manon was ſuperior to every

every fear, and worth every hazard. Forgive me, ſaid I to my friend, if my love now makes me raſh: I muſt attempt it, be the conſequence what it will; and as to leaving Paris, it is what I propoſe doing. We then agreed with the ſervant that we would defer our enterprize only until the next day: and to ſecure the ſucceſs of it as much as poſſible, he deſired us to carry a ſuit of men's cloaths for Manon to put on, which he thought would very much facilitate his plan. It was difficult to get them into the houſe; but my invention ſupplied me with the means. I deſired De Tiroux to put a thin waiſtcoat under his own; the care of providing every thing elſe I took upon myſelf: and the next morning when we returned to the hoſpital, I carried, concealed in my cloaths, linen and ſtockings, and put over my uſual coat a very long ſurtout, which prevented

prevented any obſervation on the fulneſs of the reſt of my dreſs.

As ſoon as we got into her room, De Tiroux gave her his waiſtcoat, and I my coat, as the ſurtout was enough to go out with; and nothing was now wanting to compleat her dreſs, but breeches, which by a ſtrange overſight I had forgotten. The diſtreſs this omiſſion threw us into was ridiculous enough, and in any other ſituation would have been laughable; but in the hazardous ſtate of our enterprize it was too ſerious an embarraſſment. I was half diſtracted that ſo trifling a circumſtance ſhould threaten to overturn our whole ſcheme; however I had no means of remedying the evil but by giving her my own, which I did without farther heſitation; and in my long ſurtout, and with ſome contrivance, I got out myſelf without any remark being made on this deficiency

deficiency of my apparel, and returned to De Tiroux's houſe, where the day appeared the longeſt I had ever paſſed.

Night at length came: we got into a fiacre, and went at the appointed time to the ſtreet into which the great door of the hoſpital opens, and waited a few yards below it; where we had not been many minutes, before Manon and her conductor appeared. They both got in: I received Manon in my arms, who trembled like a leaf. The coachman aſked where he was to go? Drive me, ſaid I, to the end of the world—carry me where I ſhall never more be ſeparated from Manon!

This unguarded ſally, which I know not what poſſeſſed me to make, nearly occaſioned the moſt fatal conſequence. The coachman remarked ſo extraordinary an

an expreſſion; and when De Tiroux told him whither he ſhould drive us, he ſaid he was afraid we were engaged in a bad affair, and perhaps he ſhould be involved in its conſequences; for he ſaw plainly that the handſome youth was a woman whom we had reſcued from the hoſpital, and he was not all diſpoſed to ruin himſelf to oblige us. This ſcrupulous nicety meant only that we were to pay an extraordinary price for the coach; but we were in too much danger for expoſtulation. Huſh! huſh! friend, cried I, it will be a Louis d'or in your way: after which, if I had propoſed to him to burn the hoſpital he would have aſſiſted me without ſcruple.

We were now taken to L'Eſcaut's lodgings. It was late, and De Tiroux deſired to be put down near his own houſe, which was in our way, promiſing to call upon us,

us the next day. Manon wept with joy at ſeeing herſelf as we hoped in ſecurity: but we had dreadful alarms yet to encounter. When we ſtopped at the door of the houſe where L'Eſcaut lodged, a diſpute commenced with the coachman that threatened the moſt fatal cataſtrophe: I repented of having promiſed him a Louis; not only becauſe the ſum was ſo unreaſonable, but becauſe I really had not a Louis in the world: a Louis however I ſhould have given him if I could have obtained it from L'Eſcaut, whom I ſent for to the door, and told him in a whiſper my ſituation. He, who was of a fierce and violent diſpoſition, and but little accuſtomed to moderate his ill humour towards the driver of a fiacre, anſwered aloud—a Louis for the raſcal! give him rather twenty good blows with your cane! So ſaying, he ſnatched my cane out of my hand, meaning to execute his threat; but the coachman, who had

had perhaps before felt that the wrath of a life guard, or mouſqueteer, was not to be encountered with impunity, drove off as faſt as he could, loudly complaining that I had deceived him, but that he knew how to make me repent it, and that I ſhould certainly hear from him. This gave me the ſevereſt inquietude; for I doubted not but that he would apply to the next Commiſſary, and tell all he knew of us. You undo us, L'Eſcaut, ſaid I; there is now no ſafety for us here; we muſt inſtantly depart, or the Commiſſary will be upon us. So ſaying, I gave Manon my arm, and haſtened away from a place where we were in ſuch inſtant danger, accompanied by L'Eſcaut, and followed by the ſervant.

It is aſtoniſhing by what a ſtrange courſe Providence ſometimes brings about its ordinations. Scarce had we advanced an hundred paces on our way, when a man of military appearance, but whoſe face I did

did not diſtinctly ſee, approached us, and going cloſe to L'Eſcaut, cried out "It is, L'Eſcaut; he ſups to-night in the other world," and inſtantly fired a piſtol, the ball of which entered his temple, and he fell dead at our feet, while the aſſaſſin eſcaped immediately.

I now preſſed Manon more eagerly to haſten away. To the corps before us, our preſence was uſeleſs, and our aſſiſtance impoſſible; and I dreaded that the watch, who I knew would inſtantly appear, would ſtop us. We haſtened then, Manon, the ſervant and I, down the firſt croſs ſtreet that we came to; but ſhe was ſo terrified that it was with great difficulty I ſupported her trembling ſteps 'till we reached the end of the ſtreet, where we ſaw a fiacre ſtand, into which we got; but when the coachman aſked us where he ſhould take us to, I knew not what to reply.

I had

I had no certain aſylum, no friend to whom I dared have recourſe in this exigency; and what was yet worſe, I was without money, having not more than half a Louis in my pocket. Fright and fatigue had ſo overwhelmed Manon, that ſhe was fainting in my arms, while my own imagination was filled with horror and amazement at the recent murder of L'Eſcaut, and dread of being ſtopped by the watch: What could I do? whither go? Happily, after a moment's pauſe, I recollected the inn at Chaillot, where I paſſed ſome days with Manon before I went to live *in the village*. I thought that there, as I was known, I ſhould obtain credit for ſome days, and be in ſafety. Carry us to Chaillot, ſaid I to the coachman: he refuſed to go thither ſo late under a piſtole, which was another ſubject of embarraſſment. At length, however, we agreed for ſix livres, which was nearly all the money I had; and we went

on,

on, while I endeavoured to conſole Manon; though in fact deſpair was in my heart.

I believe I ſhould have been tempted to put an end to my exiſtence, had I not held in my arms her who alone made life deſirable. That conſoling reflection gave me courage to meet the diſtreſſes before me. I have her, ſaid I, once more! ſhe is mine! ſhe loves me! what is the world to me, what calamity can I not encounter with indifference, while ſure of that affection which is more to me than the univerſe! I felt however, that while the world was thus ſlightly regarded, I wanted ſome of its comforts to ſave me from the deplorable indigence which threatened me.

It was near midnight when we arrived at Chaillot: but the people of the inn received us like their old cuſtomers; nor were

were they ſurpriſed at ſeeing Manon en cavalier; ſince it is not unuſual in France for women to aſſume different appearances.

I directed as elegant a ſupper to be immediately prepared for her, as if we had been in the higheſt affluence: ſhe did not know that I was without money, and I determined to conceal it from her, and return in the morning to Paris, where I hoped to find a remedy for that worſt of evils.

While we ſupped, my eyes wandered over her perſon, which the darkneſs of the room in which ſhe was at the hoſpital, and the confuſion we had been in ſince ſhe left it, had prevented my obſerving before. I thought her thin, and her countenance was pale and languid: I aſked her if her paleneſs aroſe from the terror ſhe had undergone in ſeeing her brother aſſaſſinated?

She, aſſured me, that great as the ſhock was, the alteration in her countenance was not to be imputed to that; but had been occaſioned by the uneaſineſs ſhe had ſuffered by being ſo long ſeparated from me, and ignorant of what was become of me. You love me, then, Manon, cried I?—Ah! more than life! ſhe replied. And you will never leave me more? reſumed I.—Never! Never! and this aſſurance ſhe repeated ſo warmly, and with ſuch tender proteſtations, that it was impoſſible not to believe her ſincere: and I have always been perſuaded ſhe was ſo at the time; but the giddineſs and thoughtleſs gaiety of her temper, and the avidity with which ſhe purſued pleaſure and diſſipation, overcame the better qualities of her character.—Or rather her character itſelf was no longer any thing. For when ſhe ſaw other women in ſplendor and affluence, and

our future expences when we had procured wherewithal to pay for our immediate ſupport.

The queſtion then was reduced to this; how to procure a ſum for my preſent uſe? De Tiroux had repeatedly offered me his aſſiſtance; but how could I determine to accept it; how ſubmit to lay open to a man who was almoſt a ſtranger to me, my miſery and my poverty, and aſk him for money. I could not think of it without the utmoſt pain and confuſion.

I then turned my thoughts towards my friend Tiberge. My firſt friend! my good Tiberge! cried I; *he* will not ſurely refuſe me? I know the goodneſs of his nature; he will be touched with my ſorrows, and will relieve them. But alas! he will harraſs me with precepts to which

which I cannot liſten, and I ſhall be forced to hear exhortations and reproaches which will embitter all his kindneſs: and there is hardly any thing I would not rather endure than go thro' the irkſome ſcene to which my application to him will expoſe me, and the trouble and remorſe it will make me ſuffer. But is it of myſelf I am to think? No! it is the ſupport of Manon! her very exiſtence, that is now in queſtion. Her love and fidelity depend on my finding means to ſupply her with conveniencies; and compared to the fear of loſing her every other conſideration is as nothing; for ſhe is to me in place of glory, happineſs, and fortune! After this argument my ſoliloquy was ſoon at an end: I aroſe, and continued my way towards the reſidence of Tiberge.

On entering Paris I took a hackney coach, though I had not enough to pay for the hire of it; yet I thought myſelf ſo ſure of procuring money from Tiberge, that I felt no uneaſineſs about that. I ordered the man to drive to the Luxembourgh, and ſent to tell Monſieur Tiberge that I waited for him. He came inſtantly, and I told him without any apology the nature and extremity of my wants. He aſked me if the ſum of an hundred piſtoles (which I had formerly borrowed of him, and punctually repaid) would now ſuffice? and on my anſwering it would, he went immediately to fetch it, with that air of ſatisfaction that only true friendſhip can give.

Though I never entertained any doubts of his obliging me, I was ſurpriſed that I heard no murmurs or reproaches. But I was deceived in thinking

ing I ſhould get off ſo eaſily; for when he returned, and had counted out the money, he deſired me before I left him to take a turn with him in the garden; and I diſcharged the coach and followed him.

I had not mentioned Manon; and he was ignorant of her having recovered her liberty: his ſermon therefore turned only on my raſh flight from St. Lazare, and the fear he conceived of my plunging into libertiniſm. He told me that he happened to go to St. Lazare the day after my eſcape, where he was ſhocked and ſurpriſed at hearing the manner of it from the good Superior, who had not recovered from his fear and agitation, but however had the generoſity to conceal what had happened from the Lieutenant of the Police, and had prevented the wound of the porter's ſervant, (who

was not dead,) from being known out of the houſe. I had therefore, ſaid he, nothing to fear from that quarter; but he beſought me to make uſe of this favorable turn in my affairs, to recover my reaſon; and immediately write to my father to ſolicit a reconciliation, and leave to return to my family.

I heard him to the end; and in much of his diſcourſe I found ſubject of ſatisfaction. I had nothing now to dread from the affair of St. Lazare, and might walk fearleſsly in the ſtreets of Paris. I was alſo glad to find that Tiberge had not the ſmalleſt idea that Manon was out of the hoſpital, and again with me; and I remarked that he avoided naming her, in the perſuaſion perhaps that my attachment was at an end, ſince I appeared ſo unconcerned at her ſituation.

I deter-

I determined to take his advice in one reſpect, which was to write to my father, and entreat his forgiveneſs; aſſuring him I would on that condition return to my duty.

My hope was, that ſuch an application would induce him to ſend me a ſum of money under pretence of having occaſion for it to defray the expences of a courſe of exerciſes in the academy; (for I did not believe he would again liſten to my pretenſions of entering into orders) nor in profeſſirg a deſire to begin a courſe of academical exerciſe was I entirely inſincere. I wiſhed to be occupied by ſuch improvements as became my age, and the ſtation to which I was born, when theſe purſuits could be conciliated with my love; and I ſaw nothing improper or impoſſible in purſuing theſe ſtudies, and living with Manon.

I pro-

I promiſed Tiberge to write that very day to my father; and as ſoon as I left him went into a coffee houſe for that purpoſe. I wrote in a ſtyle ſo moving and ſubmiſſive, that in reading over my letter I perſuaded myſelf it would have the effect I intended, on the tender and paternal heart of my father.

Tho' I was now in a ſituation to pay a coach, I felt myſelf ſo proud of my liberty, that I reſolved to go on foot to De Tiroux's; but as I walked along, it ſtruck me that though I had nothing to apprehend from what had happened at St. Lazare, I was ſtill in danger from the affair of the hoſpital, and was not free from hazard in regard to the murder of L'Eſcaut: for as I was laſt with him, I might be called upon as a witneſs of his death. The recollection of theſe circumſtances threw me into a pannic; inſomuch,

much, that going into an obſcure corner, I called from thence to the firſt hackney coach I ſaw paſſing, which carried me directly to De Tiroux, who laughed heartily at my fright when I deſcribed it to him. It appeared indeed laughable to myſelf, when he informed me I had nothing to apprehend either from aſſiſting in the flight of Manon or from having been preſent at the death of her brother. He ſaid, that fearing he might himſelf have been ſuſpected of carrying off Manon from the hoſpital, he had gone thither the next day, and pretending entire ignorance of what had happened, aſked to ſee her; and that the people of the houſe were ſo far from ſuppoſing that either himſelf or me had had any ſhare in her elopement, that they eagerly related her flight to him, and expreſſed their aſtoniſhment that ſo beautiful a girl as Manon ſhould go off with a ſervant. To which De

Tiroux

Tiroux anſwered coldly, that he ſaw nothing ſurprizing in it; for liberty was ſo deſirable, that it was natural to loſe ſight of all other conſiderations in our endeavours to obtain it.

De Tiroux, from the hoſpital went to L'Eſcaut's lodgings, not doubting but that Manon and I were there; but the man of the houſe proteſted he had not ſeen us, and told him it was not at all ſurprizing that we had not been there, for that we undoubtedly had heard L'Eſcaut was aſſaſſinated. On enquiring of this man into the circumſtances of this extraordinary affair, he had learned, that about two hours before it happened, one of L'Eſcaut's comrades in the guards came to his room, and they ſat down to play; when L'Eſcaut won ſo rapidly, that the other, who in leſs than an hour had loſt all his money, (conſiſting of about

about an hundred crowns,) from impatience became outrageous; and when they left play finding himself without a livre, had desired L'Escaut to lend him some of the money he had won of him; which not being readily complied with, a quarrel began, which arose to the highest pitch of animosity on both sides, and a challenge was given which L'Escaut refused to accept; whereupon the other left him, swearing he would take the first opportunity of being revenged, which threat he executed the same night.

Monsieur De Tiroux added that he had been extremely uneasy about Manon and me, and anxious to know where we were. I informed him of the place of our retreat; and he begged I would give him leave to sup with us that evening, which request I answered as his friendly politeness deserved.

As

As I had nothing now to do but to get linen and cloaths for Manon, I told him that we might go to Chaillot together, if he would only be ſo good as to wait for me while I purchaſed a few neceſſaries for which we had immediate occaſion.

I know not whether he thought I made this propoſal to take advantage of his generoſity, or whether he acted from the mere impulſe of his natural liberality, but he agreed to go with me to the ſhops, and begged he might recommend thoſe that ſerved his father's houſe; where he himſelf choſe many articles of apparel, much richer and of an higher price than I ſhould have thought of purchaſing, and forbid the tradeſmen to receive any money from me in payment, which he took entirely on himſelf. This he did in a manner ſo noble and eaſy, that I did not bluſh at receiving his generous gifts; and

and as ſoon as our commiſſions were executed we haſtened to Chaillot, where I rejoined Manon, with a heart much lightened of the weight it felt when I left her in the morning.

The attention I had given to the Chevalier des Grieux convinced him I was much intereſted in his hiſtory; but as he had now ſpoken for near two hours, and appeared fatigued, I begged he would take a ſhort reſpite, and favor us with his company at ſupper. He did ſo; and as ſoon as the table was removed, he reaſſumed his narrative as follows; and the concluſion appeared to me more extraordinary and affecting than what had preceded it.

END OF VOLUME I.

MANON L'ESCAU

OR,

The Fatal Attachme

A FRENCH STORY.

VOLUME II.

LONDON.

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MANON L'ESCAUT:

A FRENCH STORY.

MY return with an air of perfect content, and the polite attentions of my friend de Tiroux, diſſipated all remaining anxiety from the boſom of Manon. Her countenance was again lightened up with ſmiles, and her eyes reaſſumed their luſtre. Let us forget, ſaid I, my dear love, our paſſed terrors, and determine to enjoy our returning happineſs: Love is ſtill a propitious deity; he forſakes not his faithful ſervants; and all the malice of fortune is

little in compariſon of the felicity he beſtows.

More happy with Manon and my hundred piſtoles, than the richeſt citizen of Paris with his accumulated treaſures, I gave way to the gaiety of my preſent diſpoſition; nor did any fears for the future, embitter theſe agreeable moments. I was almoſt ſure that my father would allow me wherewithal to live handſomely at Paris, becauſe as I was now in my twentieth year I ſhould ſoon have a right to demand a ſhare of my mother's fortune.

I did not conceal from Manon that my preſent ſtock of money conſiſted only of an hundred piſtoles; but it was enough to keep us from inconvenience till ſomething better occurred; which we thought muſt ſoon happen, either from

from the claims I had on my mother's property, or from the reſources of play. The firſt fortnight or three weeks paſſed without my thinking of any thing but the happineſs I was again poſſeſſed of. Some remains of ſentiment, as well as ſome fear of the Police, made me delay from day to day returning to the Aſſociation at the Hotel de Tranſylvanie. I contented myſelf with frequenting leſs remarkable parties; and the favour of fortune for this time prevented the neceſſity of my having recourſe to any diſhonorable means to ſecure her on my ſide. I uſually paſſed a part of my afternoon at Paris, and returned to ſupper at Chaillot frequently accompanied by Monſieur de Tiroux, whoſe friendſhip for us ſeemed hourly to augment.

In my abſence Manon found amuſe-

ment in the company of ſome young women in the neighbourhood, whom the return of ſpring had brought to Chaillot. Walking, and little parties at each other's houſe, alternately employed them; and the trifling winnings they made at their card tables were allotted by the winner to pay for their coach. They frequently went to walk in the Bois de Boulogne; and when I returned of an evening I found Manon more gay, more tender, and more lovely than ever.

Some paſſing clouds however a little obſcured the ſun-ſhine of my happineſs. But they were ſoon diſſipated; and the gay and entertaining humour of Manon even turned them to our amuſement, which I ſtill remember with a melancholy pleaſure, and my lovely unfortunate girl appears to my recollection with all the

the charms I then ſaw her adorned with, when youth, beauty, and vivacity even to extravagance, (and which would have become nobody elſe) made her the moſt dangerous and moſt enchanting object in the creation.

One evening, on my return from Paris, the only valet we kept (and who was the ſame as had delivered Manon from the hoſpital) took me on one ſide, and told me, in an embarraſſed manner, that he had a ſecret of importance to communicate to me. I encouraged him to ſpeak; and he ſaid, after ſome heſitation, that a foreign nobleman ſeemed to have conceived a paſſion for Manon. The agitation of ſpirits into which this intelligence threw me, occaſioned an immediate change in my countenance. Has ſhe ſhewn any inclination for *him?* ſaid I, in a voice ſufficiently expreſſive

of what I felt. Not that I know of, Sir, anſwered my ſervant, who was frightened at the vehemence of my manner, but having ſeen this foreigner conſtantly frequent the Bois de Boulogne at thoſe hours when he was ſure of meeting Mademoiſelle Manon, and often endeavour to engage her in converſation, I thought it would be right to find out who he was, and therefore made acquaintance with his ſervants; from whom I have learned that he is an Italian Prince, and that he frequents theſe walks with a view to ſome adventure of gallantry; but I could gain no farther intelligence. This nobleman having diſcovered that I belonged to Mademoiſelle, told me, as he paſſed by me to go to his coach, that I was happy to be in the ſervice of the moſt charming perſon in the world. My ſervant trembled while he made this recital, the end of which I attended to with

with impatience. I preſſed him to diſcover more; but he proteſted he had told me every thing he knew, and that it was only the day before he had learned even that. I aſſured him I was pleaſed with his fidelity, and even promiſed him an handſome reward; and without expreſſing any miſtruſt of Manon, ordered him to watch the foreigner, and to relate to me all he obſerved.

The manner in which the man recounted this to me, threw me into the cruelleſt alarm; and I doubted whether he had not ſuppreſſed part of what he knew; but on conſideration I regretted that I had ſhewn ſo much emotion, for after all it was poſſible that Manon might be ignorant of her conqueſt; nor could I juſtly impute it to her as a crime, that ſhe was beloved. The miſery of living in a ſtate of continual jealouſy was in-

ſupportable; and yet, from what already happened, I felt that all my ſuſpicions returned on the ſlighteſt idea of a rival. I went the next day to Paris as uſual, without having formed any other reſolution than that of playing as deep and deſperately as I could, in hopes that if fortune favoured me I might be in a ſituation to quit Chaillot the moment I found any farther ſubject of inquietude. On my return, my man informed me that the foreign nobleman had appeared as uſual in the walks, and had ſpoken again to him, (the valet) and entered into a warm detail of his love for Mademoiſelle Manon; relative to whom he aſked a multitude of queſtions, and endeavoured to win him by a conſiderable bribe to deliver a letter (which he produced) to his miſtreſs.

Three days afterwards all my apprehenſions ſeemed to be confirmed: Returning

turning from Paris rather later than uſual, I was told that Manon, being that evening in the walks with her companions, had left them for a moment, and had gone into one of the oppoſite walks, whither the foreigner had followed her, and had received a letter which ſhe gave him with the moſt extravagant expreſſions of joy, which Manon however did not ſtay to ſee, but inſtantly rejoined her company, leaving her lover to kiſs and half devour the letter with the grimaces peculiar to his country. During the reſt of her walk, as well as ſince ſhe came home, the vivacity of her humour had exceeded its uſual bounds; and ſhe had inceſſantly worn the appearance of the moſt thoughtleſs gaiety. Every word of this account turned my blood cold, and I made the fellow repeat what he had told me, again and again; but finding no variation in his ſtory, I could not

doubt of my approaching misfortune; and I know not what I ſhould have done, if Manon, who heard my voice, had not come down ſtairs to meet me, and tenderly reproached me with my long abſence.

As ſoon as we were alone, ſhe overwhelmed me with careſſes, and complained in the warmeſt, yet tendereſt terms, of my long and frequent abſence; and (as I ſtill continued ſilent) ſhe told me that for above three weeks I had never paſſed twelve hours at home; that being ſo much without me was inſupportable, and ſhe expected I would ſometimes paſs a whole day with her; and particularly the next day that nothing ſhould induce me to quit her, but that I ſhould promiſe to ſtay with her both the morning and afternoon. Doubt not that I will, anſwered I, ſharply, and with

with a look that might have ſerved to alarm her; but ſhe took no notice of my warmth, and began to converſe with more than her uſual ſprightlineſs and gaiety, giving me the loveliеſt picture of the characters of her companions, and the manner in which they paſſed their time. What am I to expect from all this, ſaid I to myſelf? Strange girl! how unaccountable is thy conduct! Such an air of truth and undiſguiſed gaiety appeared in her countenance, that it was difficult to believe ſhe was diſſembling; yet the circumſtances of our firſt ſeparation, and of her ſubſequent conduct, was ever freſh in my memory.

The concern theſe ideas gave me, threw an air of melancholy into my behaviour which I imputed to a loſs at play. I conſidered, that the next day, as ſhe had herſelf engaged me not to quit

quit her, I ſhould have time for deliberation, and to make farther remarks; and I determined that if nothing appeared to oblige me openly to avow my ſuſpicions, I would quietly remove to Paris the next day, and take care to fix in ſome obſcure part of the town, where I ſhould have nothing to apprehend from a competition with Italian Princes. This determination, without putting me entirely at eaſe, made me rather more tranquil the reſt of the evening.

When we aroſe in the morning, Manon told me that tho' ſhe deſired to paſs the whole day alone in our apartment, ſhe would notwithſtanding have me dreſs, and that ſhe herſelf would dreſs my hair. My hair was then remarkably fine, and ſhe had frequently amuſed herſelf in diſpoſing it in different faſhions: I now therefore ſat down before her toilet, as uſual,

uſual, that ſhe might gratify this whim. She continued playing a thouſand tricks with my hair, and once or twice made me turn my face towards her's, and looked at me with an air of curioſity and ſatisfaction. In this trifling way we had paſſed part of the morning; and after dinner ſhe continued in the ſame playful mood, while her innocent chearfulneſs ſeemed ſo natural, and ſo unlike artifice, that I could not believe it a prelude to a new inſtance of treaſon: and I was once or twice on the point of opening my ſuſpicions to her, but delayed it only in hopes of her confeſſing to me what had paſſed.

While ſhe was ſtill trifling thus agreeably, and had inſiſted again on re-adjuſting my head, the ſervant came in to ſay that the Prince of Villabianca was below, and deſired to ſee Mademoiſelle. This threw me into a tranſport of rage. Who? What

What Prince? What does it means, cried I, puſhing her from me? Let him come up, ſaid ſhe calmly to the ſervant, who thereupon left the room. Then Manon, turning to me, ſaid in the moſt enchanting voice, beloved of my heart! thou whom I adore! I aſk only one moment's complaiſance; *one*, only *one* moment! I ſhall love thee a thouſand times better than ever; and ſhall be obliged to you as long as I live for indulging me. I ſought for words to expreſs my indignation and ſurpriſe, while ſhe repeated her entreaties; then hearing the door of the ant-ichamber open, ſhe took in one hand my long hair, which was floating on my ſhoulders, and in the other the glaſs which ſtood on her toilet, and going thus up to the door of her cloſet, which ſhe puſhed open, ſhe offered to the eyes of the aſtoniſhed ſtranger, a ſpectacle, of which he could not comprehend

the meaning. Notwithſtanding his embarraſſment, he failed not to make a moſt profound bow. But Manon did not give him time to ſpeak: ſhe held her glaſs to his face: Sir, ſaid ſhe, look well at yourſelf and do me juſtice: you deſire my love: behold the man to whom I have given it, and to whom I have ſworn eternal fidelity: compare him with yourſelf, and ſee whether you have any pretenſions to diſpute my heart; if you have, tell me on what theſe pretenſions are founded: tho' I declare to you, that in the eyes of your very humble ſervant all the Princes of Italy are of leſs eſtimation than one of theſe beautiful treſſes.

During this ridiculous harangue, which ſhe had undoubtedly meditated, I made fruitleſs efforts to diſengage myſelf; and feeling ſome compaſſion for a man of rank treated with ſo little ceremony,

ceremony, I was even diſpoſed to apologize for this inſult. But he preſently recovered his ſurpriſe; and his anſwer, which I thought groſs, took from me all my intentions of conſoling him. Mademoiſelle, ſaid he, with a forced ſmile, my eyes are indeed opened; and I ſee you are not the novice I took you for. He went down ſtairs without looking behind him, and muttering that the women of France were no better than thoſe of Italy; and I was not tempted to give him a better opinion of the fair ſex.

Manon, as ſoon as he was gone, threw herſelf into a chair, and made the room echo with burſts of laughter, in which I could not forbear accompanying her, tho' I own I thought ſhe had carried the pleaſantry too far. Touched as I was with a ſacrifice which I could attribute

attribute only to love, I felt that ſhe was become more dear to me than ever: I laughingly reproached her, however, with her rigour to her Italian lover. She recounted to me the progreſs of the amour; and told me that after having continually tormented her in the Bois de Boulogne, where he expreſſed his love by the moſt ridiculous grimaces, he had written her a letter by the coachman, wherein he made her a formal declaration of love, and gave her his name and all his titles, and promiſed her, on the other ſide the Alps, a brilliant fortune and eternal adoration. That ſhe had at firſt determined to communicate this adventure to me; but that fancying ſhe could produce ſome amuſement from it, ſhe could not reſiſt making the experiment, and had ſent the Italian a flattering anſwer, with liberty to ſee her at her houſe; and that ſhe enjoyed the ſurprize

prize in which ſhe ſhould throw us both by her manner of refuſing him. I ſaid not a word of the knowledge I had gained of this affair by another means; and the intoxication of love made me approve of all ſhe had done.

I have remarked throughout, that when I thought myſelf the happieſt, Heaven has choſen that hour for my chaſtiſement. Thus it was at this period, when I felt myſelf ſo well aſſured of Manon's tenderneſs, and the friendſhip of De Tiroux, that I apprehended nothing from the malignity of my deſtiny. That deſtiny however ſtill purſued me, and now prepared for me ſuch a fatal cataſtrophe, as reduced me to the deplorable extremity in which you ſaw me at Peſſy, and afterwards into ſuch calamities as can hardly be believed.

One evening, a few days after Manon had diſmiſſed her Italian admirer, we were at ſupper at our hotel with De Tiroux, when we heard a coach ſtop at the door, a circumſtance which at that unuſual hour excited our curioſity. We enquired who it was, and heard that it was young Gevres de Malleville, the ſon of our moſt cruel enemy; at whoſe name name the blood ruſhed into my face. He comes, cried I impetuouſly, that I may puniſh him for the infamous uſage I have received from his father: he ſhall not leave the place till we have meaſured our ſwords. Monſieur de Tiroux, whoſe intimate friend he was, entreated me to be cool, and aſſured me he was a moſt amiable young man, whoſe ſentiments were ſo different from thoſe of his father, that nothing had ever given him ſo much concern as the injuries we had ſuffered; and that I ſhould no ſooner be acquainted with him than I ſhould grant

him

him my friendſhip, and be deſirous of his.

He entreated me to give him leave to bring him up, and invite him to partake of our ſupper; and proteſted that Manon was in no danger from this interview, as he could anſwer for De Malleville as for himſelf; and was ſure that as ſoon as he knew us he would become our moſt zealous advocate. After ſuch aſſurances I no longer heſitated, and De Tiroux went down to his friend.

Before they joined us, he told him to whom he was going to be introduced, and we beheld a young man whoſe perſon and addreſs were very pleaſing and agreeable. He expreſſed in polite terms his ſatisfaction at the favour Tiroux had done him in procuring him our acquaintance;

ance, and eat of our repaſt with an appetite that did it honor. When the ſervants had removed the table, our converſation became more ſerious: he aſſumed an air of contrition and ſorrow, in ſpeaking of the outrage his father had committed, and made us many apologies. I will ſhorten my excuſes, ſaid he, to leave as ſoon as poſſible a ſubject which I cannot recollect without ſhame. Warm as theſe ſentiments were in the beginning of our converſation, they ſoon became much more ſo; for he had not been half an hour with us, before I diſcovered that the charms of Manon had their uſual effect; his eyes and manner ſenſibly betrayed him; and tho' he carefully avoided every word that tended that way, I had too much experience in love not to know the ſource of his looks and attentions. He ſtaid with us till a very late hour, and it was day break

break before he could determine to quit us, which at length he did with a thouſand proteſtations of unalterable friendſhip, and with a requeſt that we would give him leave ſometimes to renew a viſit which had given him ſo much pleaſure.

He took De Tiroux with him in his coach. I had at this time the moſt tranquil reliance on the conſtancy of Manon, and the obſervations I made gave me no manner of uneaſineſs. That lovely creature was ſo entirely miſtreſs of my heart, that I had no other ſentiments than thoſe of adoration joined to eſteem; and far from imputing to her as a crime that ſhe had charmed De Malleville, I felt my ſelf-love flattered in finding myſelf the ſole poſſeſſor of the heart and perſon of a woman whom all the world ſeemed to allow the moſt enchanting

chanting and perfect of her ſex; and I determined not to mention to her what I had remarked of De Malleville.

As we were now provided with cloaths fit to appear in public, and thought there was not any hazard in it, Manon was deſirous of going to the play: De Tiroux, however, who came early the next day, was to be conſulted upon this; and he ſoon found that to gratify Manon he muſt ſay yes. But this reſolution was not executed: for having taken me apart, he told me he was extremely uneaſy at ſomething that had happened: I came hither to tell you, ſaid he, the conſequence of our party laſt night; Gevres de Malleville is madly in love with Manon, and has told me ſo: however I am attached to him, I am equally ſo to you. His intentions in regard to her are extremely blameable and unjuſt, and

and I do not conſider myſelf obliged to keep his ſecret, which perhaps I might have done had he meant only to have tried his fortune fairly with your miſtreſs. But I find that he is well informed of the diſpoſition of Mademoiſelle Manon. He knows ſhe loves pleaſure and affluence, and as he is already poſſeſſed of a conſiderable fortune, he means to tempt her at once by a magnificent preſent, and the offer of a ſettlement of ten thouſand livres a year. Had you been upon an equal footing, I ſhould perhaps have made a point of not betraying him; but juſtice, as well as friendſhip, obliges me to put you on your guard, and the more ſo as I have been the unlucky cauſe of his paſſion, by imprudently introducing him to your acquaintance.

I thanked De Tiroux for this important communication; and with an ingenuouſneſs

nuouſneſs equal to his own, I acknowledged that De Malleville had been rightly informed as to the diſpoſition of Manon: that poverty was an evil ſhe could not ſupport; but that however while there was only a difference of more or leſs I believed her quite incapable of quitting me for another. That now I had little therefore to fear on that ſcore. I was in a ſituation to let her feel no diſtreſs; and as my mother's fortune muſt ſoon be in my poſſeſſion, I ſhould every day be better able to ſupport her in the abundance ſhe could not diſpenſe with. However, added I, it is greatly to be feared, that when De Malleville finds he cannot ſucceed, he may diſcover our retreat, and do us ſome very ill offices. Apprehend nothing from thence, ſaid De Tiroux; Gevres de Malleville is capable of an amorous indiſcretion, but not of an action of cruelty and cow-

ardice. If he ſhould, however, be aſſured I would be the firſt to puniſh him, and to repair the misfortune I ſhould ſo unhappily have brought upon you. I thank you for this ſentiment, my dear friend, ſaid I, but the miſchief would be done, and the remedy uncertain: it is eaſier to prevent evils than to cure them; therefore the wiſeſt way will be to withdraw from the danger, by quitting Chaillot, and ſettling ourſelves elſewhere. It might ſo, anſwered he, were there time for the arrangement; but it will be difficult, if not impoſſible, for you to do ſo before De Malleville will be here. As we went home laſt night, or rather this morning, he told me he ſhould be here by noon, which made me come as ſoon as I could, to give you notice of his views: you may expect him immediately.

This

This unexpected and unwiſhed for event brought the danger ſo near, that I could no longer look on it with indifference; and as I ſaw that De Malleville was determined to open himſelf to Manon, I thought it better to tell her what I had heard of the intentions of this new rival; believing that when ſhe found I knew of his addreſſes, ſhe would have ſtrength enough to refuſe his offers. I told De Tiroux my thoughts, who anſwered that it was a delicate meaſure to hazard. I owned it was, but that every right a man *could* have to depend upon the fidelity of a woman, I had to rely on that of Manon. She loves eaſe and luxury, but ſhe loves me I truſt ſtill more: the greatneſs of his offers will not dazzle her while I have abundance to give her; for ſhe is delicate, but not avaricious; and will ſurely prefer me to

the ſon of a man who has ſent her to the hoſpital.

Confirming myſelf in this idea, I went to Manon, and told her plainly all I had heard, and my confidence in her attachment. She thanked me for the good opinion I had of her, and proteſted ſhe would receive the offers of Gevres de Malleville in ſuch a manner as ſhould give him no inclination to renew them. No, ſaid I, you muſt not venture offending him by any rudeneſs; he may be very hurtful to us; but you know ways enough, you little rogue you, to get rid of troubleſome lovers. Stay, ſaid ſhe, an excellent notion ſtrikes me; and I pique myſelf upon my invention: Gevres de Malleville is the ſon of our moſt cruel enemy; we will revenge the injuries the father has done us, not on the

the perſon, but the purſe of his ſon. I will liſten to him, accept his preſents, and laugh at him. Truly, ſaid I, the project is a pretty one; but you forget that by ſuch a ſcheme you got into the hoſpital. It was in vain however that I argued: her reſolution was taken, ſhe told me it was only neceſſary to take our meaſures well, and that there was nothing to fear. I ſuffered myſelf again to be drawn into this irreparable ruin, by the caprice of an adored miſtreſs; and while I agreed to make a *dupe* of De Malleville, by the uſual fatality that attended me, I became his.

About eleven o'clock his coach ſtopped. He made us the moſt ſtudied compliments on the liberty he took in coming to dine with us—De Tiroux had invented ſome excuſe to avoid

coming in his coach, and had promiſed to meet him at our apartments. We ſat down to dinner with all the appearance of gaiety and good humour, tho' there was not one among us who had not treaſon in his heart. I left the room, and took De Tiroux with me on pretence of having ſomething to ſay to him; De Malleville therefore had an opportunity of ſpeaking to Manon, of which he failed not to take advantage. I found on my return that ſhe had not given him reaſon to deſpair, for he was in the gayeſt humour in the world. I affected the ſame vivacity; and he laughed inwardly at my ſimplicity; while the whole afternoon paſſed away in lively diſcourſe or profeſſions of regard; and he went away as much pleaſed with my apparent eaſineſs, as with the elegance of our entertainment.

No ſooner was he departed in his coach with De Tiroux, than Manon ran to me with open arms, and embraced me, laughing exceſſively. She then repeated to me his propoſals, without forgetting a word, which amounted to this; that if ſhe would quit me, he would ſhare with her forty thouſand livres a year, of which he was already in poſſeſſion, (without reckoning the very large fortune he muſt inherit from his father;) ſhe ſhould be miſtreſs of his heart and fortune, and he would immediately eſtabliſh her in an elegant furniſhed houſe, with a coach, a femme de chambre, three footmen, and other ſervants in proportion. Truly, cried I, when ſhe had done, the ſon is a better ſubject than the father. Speak truly, Manon, does not ſuch a ſplendid offer tempt you? Ah! can you believe it does? ſaid ſhe;

and altering a line of Racine's to expreſs her thoughts, ſhe cried,

'Moi!—vous me ſoupconner de cette perfidie,
'Moi! je pourrois ſouffrir un viſage odieux,
'Qui rappelle toujours l'hopital a mes yeux?'

No, anſwered I, continuing the parody,

J'aurois peine a croire, que l'hopital Madame,
Fut un trait dont l'amour l'eut gravè dans votre ame.

But however all this is very feducing. What has Love to oppoſe againſt this furniſhed houſe, coach and footmen? She ſeemed much hurt at my ſuſpicions, and proteſted her heart was ever mine,

and

and that no other attachment could ever find a place there. Rather, ſaid ſhe, I am diſpoſed to vengeance than to love. What then have you any intention of going further, cried I? Do you mean to take his coach and houſe? No, only his money, anſwered ſhe. It will however be difficult to get the one without the other: but before I can digeſt my plan I will wait the arrival of a letter he promiſed to write, in which he was to explain every thing fully. This letter was in fact delivered to Manon the next day, by a ſervant out of livery, who contrived to ſpeak to her alone. She bid him wait her anſwer, and brought the letter immediately to me, and we opened it together. Beſides the common place profeſſions of adoration, it contained a pompous aſſemblage of all the brilliant offers of my rival. He engaged, on giving

poſſeſſion of his houſe, to pay her ten thouſand franks; and ſo to repair the diminution of that ſum, that ſhe ſhould always have as much at her command. The day in which ſhe was to become miſtreſs of all this was not delayed to a very diſtant period.

He engaged to have every thing ready in two days, and named the ſtreet and houſe where he would wait for her, if ſhe could diſengage herſelf from me. This alone gave him diſquiet, as he ſeemed ſure of her compliance: he therefore entreated her to ſatisfy him by a written anſwer; adding that if ſhe found any difficulty in getting from me, he would find means to make her eſcape eaſy.

Young Gevres de Malleville knew better what he was about than his father did;

did; and determined to be ſure of his prize before he paid for it. I renewed my perſuaſions to Manon to relinquiſh this dangerous enterprize, and repreſented in the ſtrongeſt colours the evils it might bring upon us: but nothing could ſhake her reſolutions, and mine again gave way. She ſent a ſhort anſwer to De Malleville, aſſuring him that ſhe ſhould find no difficulty in getting to Paris at the time named, and that he might certainly expect her.

It was then agreed between us, that I ſhould go immediately and hire another lodging in one of the villages on the other ſide of Paris, and ſhould carry with me our few poſſeſſions: that the afternoon of the following day, which was that of her aſſignation, ſhe ſhould go to Paris, and after having received the preſents

ſents her lover had promiſed her, ſhe ſhould deſire him to take her to the play, whither ſhe ſhould contrive to carry what money and jewels ſhe could diſpoſe about her, and give the reſt to my valet, Marcel, whom ſhe determined to take with her: (he was the young man, thro' whoſe aſſiſtance ſhe was delivered from the hoſpital, and who appeared to be extremely attached to us.) I was to go in a fiacre to the ſtreet called St. André des Arc, and towards ſeven o'clock was to conceal myſelf at the door of the theatre, among the croud. Her purpoſe was to invent an excuſe for quitting her box a moment, which ſhe would employ in eſcaping to me; after which we were to regain our coach, and drive out of Paris by the Fauxbourg de St. Antoine, which was the way to our new lodgings.

This deſign, extravagant as it was, and almoſt impoſſible to be executed;

and

and tho' it too much reſembled what had before been ſo fatal to us, yet appeared to her to be mighty well planned. Had it really been ſo, and could we have executed the flight ſhe meditated, it was madneſs to ſuppoſe we ſhould not be overwhelmed with the conſequences. However ſuch was the blind complaiſance with which I agreed to whatever ſhe deſired, that I expoſed myſelf to this hazard with the raſheſt confidence.

The hour arrived when Manon was to go. With an aching and foreboding heart I ſaw her get into a coach, attended by Marcel, our footman. Before ſhe went, I embraced her, and ſaid in a melancholy tone, Manon! are you not going to betray me? *Ah!* will you not deceive *me?* She complained tenderly of my miſtruſt, and renewed in the warmeſt

warmeſt terms her aſſurances, and even oaths of everlaſting fidelity. She propoſed being at Paris about three o'clock. I went ſoon after her, and hid myſelf the reſt of the afternoon in the coffee-houſe De Feré, au Pont St. Michal. There I ſtaid till the hour of our appointment, when getting into an hackney coach, I drove to the end of the ſtreet St. André des Arc, and then walked to the door of the play houſe.

I was ſurpriſed not to find Marcel among the ſervants that waited there, as he had orders to remain there till he ſaw me: however I continued in impatient expectation near an hour, confounded amid the croud of people at the door, anxiouſly watching every perſon that paſſed. At length the time being elapſed when I expected Manon

to join me, I could reſtrain my agitation no longer; but entering the houſe, took a pit ticket, to ſee if I could diſcover Manon and her gallant in the boxes. In vain I ſearched the whole houſe: neither the one or the other were there. I quitted the pit, and again mingled with the croud at the door, burning with impatience and anxiety; but ſeeing nothing of thoſe I expected, I went back to my coach without knowing what to do next. The coachman perceiving me ſome paces off, met me, and told me, with an air of myſtery, that a pretty young lady had waited for me near an hour in the coach; that ſhe had deſcribed the gentleman ſhe wanted, which he was very ſure was me, and as he had told her I was coming back, ſhe had got into his coach, where ſhe ſaid ſhe would attend my return.

I imme-

I immediately concluded it was Manon: my heart bounded with joy, and ſtepping haſtily up to the coach, I beheld—not Manon!—a pretty little face of ſixteen or ſeventeen, which I had never ſeen before, appeared at the door, and aſked if ſhe had not the honor of ſpeaking to the Chevalier des Grieux? on my anſwering, yes; I have a letter for you, Monſieur, ſaid ſhe, which will inform you of the reaſon of my waiting on you, and how I have the happineſs of knowing your name. I begged her to give it me, and to permit me to read it in a neighbouring public houſe; whither ſhe would follow me, and deſired me to aſk for a private room. From whom did you take this letter, Mademoiſelle, ſaid I? She anſwered by deſiring me to read it. As ſoon as I got

to a light, I perceived it to be the hand of Manon, and theſe were its contents.

She told me that Gevres de Malleville had received her with a politeneſs and magnificence beyond what ſhe could have formed any idea of; that he had overwhelmed her with preſents, and had promiſed her a continuation of princely ſplendor. Notwithſtanding which ſhe aſſured me, ſhe did not forget me, but that as ſhe could not prevail on Monſieur de Malleville to take her that evening to the play, ſhe was obliged to poſtpone to a more favorable opportunity the pleaſure of ſeeing me; but that to conſole me for the chagrin this failure on her part might poſſibly occaſion me, ſhe had found means to procure, as the bearer of her letter, one of the prettieſt girls

girls in Paris. This billet was ſigned, your faithful and affectionate, Manon L'Eſcaut.

There was ſomething ſo cruel and inſulting in this letter, that ſtruck to the heart as I was with it, I felt all that moment as if by a ſudden effort I could forget and throw off for ever my unworthy paſſion, and my ungrateful miſtreſs. I turned my eyes on the young woman who ſtood before me. She was extremely pretty, and I wiſhed to have found her enough ſo to have eraſed the impreſſion of Manon on my torn heart: but that was impoſſible! Had ſhe poſſeſſed the expreſſive and bewitching eyes of Manon, her noble air, that complexion which ſeemed a mingled aſſemblage of the moſt delightful tints of nature, and in ſhort all the infinity of

of charms which adorned that incomparable creature, ſtill not being Manon, ſhe was to me nothing.

Go back, ſaid I to the poor girl; go back to her that ſent you; go tell her to enjoy all the advantages of her perfidy, and enjoy them if ſhe can without remorſe. I abandon her for ever! I drive her from my thoughts, and for her ſake all her ſex! none can be ſo charming as ſhe is! but as worthleſs! as cruel! as mercenary! I believe them all to be!

I was going down ſtairs, without knowing what I did. The rage and agony of my heart concealed itſelf under a mournful and gloomy tranquility; and I even thought I could bear my misfortune with reſignation, ſince I felt none of

of thoſe frantic exceſſes of paſſion I had experienced on the former occaſions. Alas! I was again the dupe of my own heart. The unfortunate girl who had brought me the letter, ſeeing me go down ſtairs, ſtopped me to aſk what I would have her ſay to Monſieur Gevres de Malleville and the lady who was with him? I ſtepped back into the room, and felt one of thoſe ſudden changes from a ſeeming tranquility to rage and madneſs, which only thoſe who know the wild extravagance of violent paſſions can imagine. The moſt ungoverned fury ſeemed to have ſeized my ſenſes. Go! ſaid I to the affrighted girl, carry to De Malleville and his infamous miſtreſs, all the deſpair their curſed letter has given me! But tell them their triumph ſhall be ſhort: this hand, this ſword, ſhall find the

way to their hearts. I tore my hair, daſhed my head againſt the wall, and threw myſelf on the floor, while the trembling creature endeavoured to ſecure my ſword. Then having exhauſted my breath and my ſtrength, my ſtupor ſeemed to return. I fixed my eyes on the firſt object before me, but ſaw nothing. A ſtream of tears ran down my cheeks, which, with the ſighs that ſeemed to rend my heart, gave me ſome relief.

Come hither, child, cried I; come hither; you are ſent, you ſay, to conſole me. Tell me if you know any remedy for rage, deſpair, and madneſs? Can you cure me of my wiſh to deſtroy, firſt my perfidious miſtreſs and her ſeducer, and then myſelf? Yes; come! (ſeeing her approach me timidly,) come, reſtore peace to my heart; tell me you

you love me; let me accuſtom myſelf to hear thoſe words from other lips than thoſe of Manon: you are pretty; perhaps I may learn to love you.

The poor young creature, who ſeemed more modeſt than thoſe of her unhappy profeſſion generally are, was ſtruck with terror and ſurpriſe at this ſtrange ſcene: ſhe came however fearfully to me; but ſhe had no ſooner done ſo, than I threw her from me with abhorrence. What would you have with me, wretched creature! ſaid I; are you not a woman? are you not of a ſex I deteſt? the ſoftneſs of your countenance hides the heart of an hyena; and treaſon and death is in your boſom. Go, leave me! leave me! She was not unwilling, I believe, to obey me, but being ſufficiently frightened, was haſtening to the door, when I called to her to ſtop. Before you go, tell me, cried

cried I, why? how? and with what deſign you was ſent to me? Tell me how you knew my name, and where to find me. She anſwered, that ſhe had long been acquainted with Monſieur Gevres de Malleville, who that evening, at five o'clock, had ſent to fetch her to a great houſe in a ſtreet where ſhe had never ſeen him before; that there ſhe found him with a very handſome young lady, playing at piquet, and that they had together commiſſioned her to bring me that letter; telling her that ſhe would find me at the end of the ſtreet St. André, in a hackney coach. I aſked her if they had ſaid nothing more. She replied, bluſhing, that they had given her hopes of being entertained by me as a miſtreſs. They deceived you, exclaimed I, poor unhappy girl! they deceived you: you want a lover who is rich and happy, and I am neither. Return rather

ther to Monſieur de Malleville, he poſſeſſes all that is neceſſary to ſecure the hearts and perſons of pretty women. He has furniſhed houſes, and carriages, jewels, and cloaths to give them: but I!— I who have nothing but love and conſtancy to offer them, muſt be deſpiſed, and my miſery and ſimplicity is a ſubject for their ridicule.

I ran on thus, as the various emotions aroſe in my ſoul, almoſt without knowing what I was doing, till the violence of my agitation, which was too great to laſt, began to ſubſide. The tranſport of paſſion by degrees gave way to other reflections. I conſidered that this calamity was poſſibly to be repaired; and I aſked myſelf why I ſhould be ſo extremely afflicted at a circumſtance which I might have eaſily foreſeen, and indeed as eaſily have prevented: and why ſhould I not

I not rather endeavour to find a remedy for my misfortunes, than perpetuate them by giving myself up to ridiculous and useless despondency. I then began to reflect on every means that were likely to restore my mistress to me. To undertake to tear her by force from De Malleville, would be desperation, and had not the least appearance of success: but I thought if I could see her for a moment, the influence I still hoped I had over her would again throw her into my arms. I thought I knew her heart and its feelings so well, that I should attack it with advantage. I knew she loved me; and amidst her giddiness, and wanton trifling with my anguish, I thought I had a lasting ascendancy over her. I determined then to employ every art to procure a sight of her; and after

many ſchemes, I fixed on the following one.

De Tiroux had rendered me ſo many ſervices, that I could not doubt of the ſincerity of his friendſhip and affection for me: I propoſed then to go to him inſtantly, and engage him to ſend for Gevres de Malleville, on ſome pretence or other, which might give me time to ſpeak to Manon; whom I meant to ſeek even in the houſe of Gevres de Malleville, during his abſence. This idea reſtored me to ſome degree of tranquility. I made a liberal preſent to the young girl who was ſtill with me; and that ſhe might not return to De Malleville to recount the ſcene that had paſſed, I took from her a direction to her lodgings, and gave her reaſon to believe I would paſs the night with her there.

As

As ſoon as I had diſmiſſed her, I got into my fiacre, and bid the coachman drive me as faſt as poſſible to St. Anne's ſtreet, where De Tiroux dwelt, and I was lucky enough to find him at home, of which good fortune I doubted, and feared as I went along. I acquainted him inſtantly with the ſubject of my uneaſineſs, and the ſervice I expected from him. He ſeemed ſurpriſed and ſhocked to learn that De Malleville had ſo eaſily ſeduced Manon from me; and he knew that he was the original occaſion of it, by introducing him ſo inconſiderately to our acquaintance; and I took care not to tell him that I had in a great meaſure been acceſſary to my own misfortune, by conſenting to the plan Manon had formed of poſſeſſing herſelf of De Malleville's money and preſents, and

then quitting him as ſhe had done his father.

De Tiroux, full of indignation againſt De Malleville, and of compaſſion for me, offered me his ſword, and that of all his friends if it were neceſſary to reſtore me my miſtreſs; but I told him, that by cunning, rather than by force, we muſt hope to retrieve her; and that any violent proceedings in our ſituation might be fatal to us both. Let us keep our ſwords, ſaid I, for the laſt extremity only. I think I have found an eaſier and more certain way.

He acceded to all I propoſed, and engaged without heſitation to do whatever I requeſted of him. I told him then, that all I now wiſhed was, that he would ſend a meſſage to De Malleville, to let him

him know that he muſt inſtantly ſpeak to him on an affair of conſequence; and that he would contrive to detain him at leaſt an hour or two. He aſſured me I ſhould be ſatisfied, and would have departed immediately to execute what I required; but I adviſed him to ſend a note from the houſe where we were, in which he (De Tiroux) ſhould deſire De Malleville inſtantly to come to him. I will watch, ſaid I, the moment of his coming out, and being known only to Manon and my valet, I ſhall eaſily gain admittance to her. When De Malleville comes, tell him that the preſſing affair on which you deſired to ſee him, is a loſs at play, that you muſt conceal from your father, and that you cannot immediately command the money; and deſire him to lend it to you for a few days. It muſt of courſe take up

ſome time for him to accommodate you, and I think I can ſucceſsfully employ it in perſuading Manon to leave him.

De Tiroux exactly followed my plan. He wrote a note as I deſired, and I went into the ſtreet where Manon lived, to wait for its effect. I ſaw the meſſenger arrive at the door, and inſtantly afterwards De Malleville went out on foot; and ſoon after him a ſervant came out, who had, I found in the ſequel, orders to follow him.

As ſoon as they were gone, I rapped gently at the door, which was opened to me by Marcel, to whom I made a ſign not to ſpeak; and aſked him in a low voice if he could not introduce me to Manon's apartment without the knowledge of the other ſervants. He ſaid that

that he eaſily could, and we went together ſoftly up ſtairs without meeting any obſtacle, and I charged Marcel to ſuffer nobody to approach while I was there.

I had now a new occaſion to admire the extraordinary character of Manon. Far from teſtifying any marks of confuſion at this unexpected meeting, ſhe ſeemed only to be ſurpriſed; and riſing up with a book ſhe had in her hand, ſhe advanced to embrace me, ſaying, ah! my love! is it you? Heavens! how hazardous you are? who would have expected you here to day?

I diſengaged myſelf from her, and put her angrily away; while ſtepping back to avoid her advances, which diſconcerted her, ſhe remained in evident

pain and confuſion. Her eyes, and the change of her complexion, expreſſed her uneaſineſs and anxiety.

Tho' I was ſo juſtly irritated againſt her, ſuch was the ſtrength of her aſcendancy over me, that in ſeeing her I almoſt forgot the juſtice of my reſentment. I was obliged to ſet before my eyes the whole ſcene that had juſt paſt, and to rouſe my indignation by reflecting on her repeated perfidy and ingratitude, and this laſt inſtance, ſo cruel and unpardonable. I remained ſilent ſometime. Manon continued ſtanding before me, ſufficiently alarmed at my agitated and diſordered looks: ſhe trembled, grew pale, and ſeemed ready to ſink at my feet.

This was a ſight that immediately ſubdued me. Ah! Manon! cried I; faithleſs!

faithleſs! perjured! inhuman girl! what words will expreſs my ſufferings? I ſee you before me pale and trembling, and ſuch is the dread I have of giving you pain, that I dare not vent the reproaches you deſerve. But my heart, my heart is broke—it cannot ſupport this laſt cruel deſertion. You have determined my death in determining to forſake me, and I come here to die before you. Manon, remember it is the third time—I cannot forget it—nothing can ever obliterate it. Form now your reſolution Manon—we ſhall be interrupted. Do I now quit you for ever?

My voice failed: I threw myſelf into a chair. She anſwered not; but when I ſat down, threw herſelf on her knees before me, and taking my hands, hid her face with them; and I found them

moiſtened with her tears. Ah! Manon! Manon! 'tis too late for all this. You affect a remorſe you do not feel, and lament only that my unexpected preſence breaks in upon the ſcheme you had formed, of luxury and diſſipation. Do not weep, but look upon me; tell me whether you remember what I have been, and what I am? Wretched girl! the man who has ſo adored you, who has loſt every thing for you, now comes to give up in your ſight that life which is without you inſupportable.

Deſpair and grief, occaſioned by the bitter recollections that now crouded on my mind, deprived me of my voice. As ſoon as I could recover it, I would have gone on: Is this the return you make for the tendereſt love? Is this your gratitude for having ſacrificed father,

father, friends, and fortune? Here the painful ideas theſe names ſuggeſted brought tears again in my eyes, and choaked my utterance. Manon, by the change of my voice, found how much I was affected. She tried to ſpeak: Yes! ſaid ſhe, (her words broken by ſobs) yes! I am undoubtedly as culpable as you ſay! Yet may Heaven puniſh me if I meant to betray you! Ridiculous diſſimulation! ſenſeleſs falſity! Not mean it? I ſee, I ſee you are a deſpicable and unprincipled creature. The meanneſs, as well as the folly and wickedneſs of your conduct, will I hope cure me of my wretched attachment. Farewel! unworthy woman! farewel for ever! Henceforth I will try to diſclaim and renounce you. Continue with your new lover; forget me; I ſhall ſoon think of you without a pang.

Terrified

Terrified by the violence of my manner, ſhe had no power to move, but continued on her knees, with her head on the chair I had left. I advanced haſtily to the door, and turning for a laſt look, I ſaw her motionleſs and hardly breathing; her eyes drowned in tears; the colour fled from her cheeks. Then it was that I found how much ſhe was ſtill miſtreſs of my heart. By one of thoſe changes to which violent paſſion ſubjects the human mind, I felt myſelf irreſiſtibly impelled to fly towards her. I raiſed her from the ground; and amidſt the tendereſt careſſes, I entreated her to forgive me, as if ſhe had been the injured perſon. I confeſſed that I was unworthy of her; and placing her in a chair, I threw myſelf in my turn on my knees, and becoming the ſuppliant, I implored her to ſay ſhe forgave me.

She

She threw her arms round my neck. Ah! it is I who am to be forgiven, my Chevalier. How ſhall I make you forget the pain I have occaſioned you, or approve of my motive for coming hither with De Malleville? Let us not talk of it then, ſaid I; but tell me, thou enchantreſs! thou to whom the power of life and death is given over me! haſt thou determined to condemn me to torments worſe than death by remaining here with my rival?

After a ſhort pauſe: my dear Chevalier! ſaid ſhe, if you had told me at firſt what it was that threw you into this violent agitation, you might have ſpared us both infinite pain; for I would have aſſured you that I was ready to follow you to the end of the world. The letter I wrote to you by the young woman,

woman, made you believe, perhaps, that I quitted you for ever, and that I even ſent her to ſupply my place; but indeed this was not my intention, whatever appearance it might have. I will tell you what paſſed. It is true that Gevres de Malleville had prepared for me a reception that exceeded every expectation I had formed. The houſe, the furniture, the equipage that he has preſented me with, are in the firſt ſtyle of magnificence. He gave me too a caſket containing ten thouſand livres, and a number of jewels, among which are the valuable pearl necklace and bracelets formerly purchaſed by his father. An elegant collation was ready for me; after which he propoſed that we ſhould ſit down to piquet while ſupper was preparing. I will own that all this profuſion ſtruck me. I conſidered that

it

it would be folly to deprive ourſelves at once of ſo many accommodations, and to content ourſelves only with the money and the jewels; for that ſhould I continue with De Malleville our fortune would evidently be eſtabliſhed, and we might live in eaſe and affluence at his expence.

I determined therefore to ſound him in regard to you, that I might ſee from his manner what probability there was of our being ſuffered to ſee each other, if you could be brought to conſent to my plan. On my naming you, he aſked me what were my ſentiments of you, and whether I felt no regret at quitting you? I anſwered, that you was every way ſo amiable, and had ever treated me with ſuch tenderneſs, that it would be ſtrange if I had no attachment to you. He allowed you

you merit; and ſaid that from the firſt he had conceived a favorable opinion of you: but he wiſhed to know how I thought you would bear my departure, when you knew I was with him. I told him that our connexion had now been of ſo long continuance, that the firſt ardor of your paſſion for me was much abated; beſides which, that your circumſtances were far from being eaſy, and that probably you would on that account be leſs hurt at an event which relieved you from an expence you was ill able to ſupport.

I added, that I had ſo little apprehended any oppoſition, that I had uſed no fineſſe to get away, but had told you I wanted to come to town on ſome buſineſs: that you having the ſame intention, we had ſet out together, and that I left you without your expreſſing any anxiety

anxiety to know whither I was going. If I thought, ſaid he, that the Chevalier was diſpoſed to live on terms of amity with me, I ſhould eagerly offer him my friendſhip and ſervices. I aſſured him that from what I knew of your character I had no doubt but that you would receive ſuch advances as you ought; particularly if he could aſſiſt you in the management of your pecuniary affairs, which in conſequence of a long diſagreement between you and your family, were in the utmoſt diſorder.

He interrupted me with proteſtations of his deſire to ſerve you to the utmoſt of his power in every way: then aſſuming a gayer air, he ſaid that if a pretty miſtreſs was your object, he would even recommend to you one he had quitted to attach himſelf to me. I approved of this idea,

idea, continued Manon, more perfectly to deſtroy all ſuſpicion of my ſincerity; and finding every thing likely to favor my project, I anxiouſly wiſhed for the means of informing you of my change of ſyſtem, fearing you would be alarmed and irritated at my miſſing my appointment.

To obtain means of writing to you, then, it was that I propoſed to him to ſend this new miſtreſs to you immediately. I was obliged to have recourſe to this expedient, for I found he would not leave me a moment. He laughed at my ſo eaſily agreeing to the project; and calling his valet de chambre, bid him go to the young woman, whoſe reſidence he knew, and direct her to go to Chaillot with a meſſage to you, which he was about to deliver, when I ſtopped him by telling him

him you was not to be found at Chaillot; for that when I left you I had ſaid I would rejoin you at the play; or if any unforeſeen circumſtance prevented my getting thither, that you had agreed to wait for me in a fiacre at the end of the ruë St. Andre. Therefore it would be far better to ſend the young woman thither, if it were only to prevent your having the mortification of waiting there fruitleſsly great part of the night; and I added that it would not be amiſs to write you a line or two deſiring you not to expect me.

To all this he agreed: but I was obliged to write while he looked over me, therefore I dared not explain myſelf too far in the letter, which I now find has given you ſo much diſquietude. I will conceal nothing from you, my Chevalier,

purſued

purſued ſhe, but relate ſimply all that happened. The young perſon mentioned by De Malleville came on receiving a meſſage from him. I found her very pretty and agreeable; and as I knew too well what uneaſineſs my abſence would give you, I really wiſhed you might find ſome conſolation in the company of this young creature: for the fidelity I aſk of *you*, Des Grieux, is not ſo much that of the perſon as that of the heart.

She concluded by naming the embarraſſment into which the receipt of De Tiroux's letter had thrown De Malleville. He heſitated, ſaid ſhe, for ſome time before he could reſolve to leave me; and having at length reluctantly determined on it, repeatedly aſſured me his ſtay ſhould not exceed three quarters of an hour; for which reaſon I could not avoid

avoid expreſſing a degree of affright when I firſt ſaw you; nor can I now behold you without terror.

I liſtened to this diſcourſe with all the temper I could command; tho' every word was as a dagger to my heart, and overwhelmed me with mortification. Her intended infidelity was ſo apparent, that ſhe had not even endeavoured to diſguiſe it. It was her deſign to become confeſſedly the miſtreſs of Gevres de Malleville. What a cruel acknowledgment for me! and how full of bitterneſs: yet I reflected that I was in ſome degree culpable myſelf; for it was I who had unguardedly thrown the temptation in her way by telling her of Malleville's paſſion for her, and by the blind facility with which I had ſuffered myſelf to be drawn into the wild project of appropriating

priating his preſents without granting him any favour in return.

The ingenuous confeſſion ſhe made affected me. The ſimplicity and openneſs with which ſhe acknowledged her errors, and the motives of thoſe errors, had ſomething in it irreſiſtibly intereſting: I ſhould perhaps rather ſay, that my violent and incurable attachment was alone a ſtronger pleader with me than all theſe conſiderations. I felt myſelf too much elated with the idea of carrying her away from my proſperous rival to reflect longer on her intended perfidy: but I could not help ſaying, in a melancholy tone of voice, Well, but Manon, with whom did you intend to have paſſed this night? This queſtion threw her into an embarraſſment that I could not ſee without pity; changing therefore

therefore the ſubject without inſiſting on her anſwer, I told her plainly that I expected ſhe would inſtantly follow me. I will certainly, Chevalier, ſaid ſhe, if you are abſolutely determined againſt my project? Your project, replied I, is infamous! mention it no more. It is enough that I forgive all that has yet paſſed. What then ſhall I go without the ten thouſand livres, and the caſket of jewels which are mine; which he has actually given me? Honor is out of the queſtion. Has De Malleville acted ſo honourably with *you*, as to give riſe to all theſe ſcruples, exclaimed Manon? This argument, a reflection on our neceſſities, and her repeated inſtances, got the better once more of the little remains of integrity which my miſerable infatuation had left me.

While we were preparing to depart, I heard ſomebody rap at the ſtreet door,

and

and concluding it to be Gevres de Malleville, I told Manon that if he appeared to contend with me he was a dead man: nor could I have commanded myſelf at the ſight of him. From this apprehenſion we were relieved by the entrance of Marcel, who brought me a letter: it was from De Tiroux, to inform me that De Malleville was gone to his own houſe to fetch the money that he (De Tiroux) had aſked of him, and that he had taken advantage of the moment to inform me. He thought I could not take a more pleaſant vengeance on my rival, than by contriving to have him detained for the night, and taking poſſeſſion of his houſe; which appeared to be eaſy enough, if I could engage two or three ſteady men, on whom I could depend, to ſtop him in the ſtreet, and keep him in cuſtody till the morrow. He concluded by promiſing

miſing to detain him (De Malleville) on ſome farther pretence, at leaſt another hour, to give me time to carry this ſcheme into execution.

I ſhewed Manon the letter, and told her by what means I had through De Tiroux's aſſiſtance got De Malleville out of the way. She was charmed with the idea, and ſtill more with what De Tiroux now propoſed: this laſt, however, I told her was an adventure I had no inclination to hazard; but ſhe abſolutely inſiſted on my undertaking it. It was in vain that I repreſented to her the improbability of my being able to find people immediately who would undertake to ſtop De Malleville, and to guard him the whole night: but ſhe proteſted ſhe ſhould think it a want both of courage and of love, if I did not at leaſt

make the attempt. Piqued at this inſinuation, and overcome by her entreaties, I yielded once more to act contrary to common ſenſe, and againſt the preſentiment I felt that ſome fatal cataſtrophe would be the conſequence of indulging this abſurd and phantaſtic humour. Nothing ſeemed ſo delightful to her as this project. You ſhall have his place at ſupper, my Chevalier, ſaid ſhe; you ſhall ſleep in his bed, and early to-morrow you ſhall carry off his money and his miſtreſs. What a delicious vengeance on both the father and the ſon.

Without being tempted with this view of a compleat revenge, and wholly becauſe ſhe would have it ſo, I went out in ſearch of two or three ſubalterns of the guards, to whom L'Eſcaut had formerly introduced me. I found only one

one of them at home; but he was an enterprizing and undaunted fellow, who no ſooner heard the ſervice I wanted done than he aſſured me of ſucceſs. I gave him ſix piſtoles, wherewith to pay ſix ſoldiers of his regiment whom he meant to employ, putting himſelf at their head. I conjured him to loſe no time. He ſoon found the men he wanted; and when I ſaw them aſſembled, I went with them, and placed them at the corner of a ſtreet which I knew De Malleville muſt of neceſſity paſs, in going from the houſe of De Tiroux to that he had hired for Manon. I deſired they would uſe him with civility, but leave no means neglected that might ſecure him; which my principal agent proteſted he would execute faithfully. His intention, he told me, was to take him to his own lodgings, and there to oblige him (De Malleville) to undreſs, and go into his

bed, while himſelf and his comrades paſſed the night in the ſame room, playing and drinking.

This method of ſecuring our prey ſeemed well imagined. I retired to an obſcure corner of the ſtreet, behind my troop; and ſoon afterwards I ſaw De Malleville appear. On my giving the ſignal we had agreed upon, that that was the man, the ſubaltern advanced to him with a fierce and reſolute air, and ſeizing his ſword arm, he put his piſtol to his breaſt, and told him he had no deſign either on his money or his life, but that he muſt follow him inſtantly, without noiſe or reſiſtance; for if he made the ſmalleſt effort to eſcape, or raiſe the notice of the paſſengers, he would inſtantly ſhoot him. Gevres de Malleville, aſtoniſhed at this ſalutation, and

and ſeeing the ſoldiers ready to ſuſtain their officer, made no attempt to diſengage himſelf; and I had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing him led away as quiet as a lamb. Returning inſtantly to Manon, I told the ſervants, as I went into the houſe, that I had been with Monſieur de Malleville, who was unexpectedly engaged by an affair that would not permit him to return to ſupper; and that he had therefore ſent me to make his excuſes to Mademoiſelle, and to have the honor of ſupping with her. She conducted herſelf ſo as make this ſeem natural to the ſervants who waited on us at table, where we appeared as almoſt ſtrangers to each other. But, as ſoon as the attendants were diſmiſſed, ſhe gave herſelf up to the natural gaiety of her temper, and we paſſed together one of the moſt agreeable evenings of our lives.

But the ſword which hung over our thoughtleſs heads but by a ſlender thread was now ready to fall.

Some minutes before twelve, I took leave of Manon, and was let out by the ſervants; but as ſoon as they were retired, Marcel opened the door again ſoftly, and I aſcended to the apartment I had juſt quitted, and we prepared to go to reſt; while our evil genius was producing the cataſtrophe that bid us reſt no more.

That I may explain at once the cauſe of this terrible effect, I ſhould remind you, that when De Malleville left the houſe of Manon, he had ordered one of his ſervants to follow him. This man was only a few paces behind his maſter when the ſoldiers had ſeized him; and terrified

terrified by ſo ſtrange an adventure, he ran inſtantly back to the houſe of De Tiroux. Not however finding him at home, and not knowing any other means of obtaining help, he went from thence to old De Malleville, where, breathleſs with his fear, he communicated to the father what had befallen his ſon, in its moſt alarming colours. The old man (who had no other child, and who knew that his ſon's thoughtleſs follies continually expoſed him to danger,) was terrified at this account: he forced, by the ſevereſt threats, the trembling valet to give him an exact account of what his ſon had done, and with whom he had paſſed that day; that he might know if he had been in ſuch company as made it probable he might be engaged in a quarrel either at play or of gallantry. The poor fellow, who believed his maſ-

ter's danger made every concealment needleſs, diſcovered all he knew; told the old man what expence he had been at for his new miſtreſs, and where he had placed her, as well as the ſubſequent tranſactions of the evening, tho' he knew not the names of any of the parties.

This recital made old De Malleville conclude that a love affair was the cauſe of his ſon's alarming adventure; and late as it was he determined to go inſtantly to the Lieutenant of the Police: he beſought this magiſtrate to give particular directions to the patrole of the night to ſtop all ſuſpected perſons; and deſiring a ſerjeant's guard for himſelf, which was inſtantly granted, he went to the ſtreet where the valet told him his ſon had been ſeized; but being unable

unable to diſcover any traces of him there, he went on to every place where he thought it at all likely he might hear of him; and being unſucceſsful, came at length to the houſe of Manon.

We had gone into the chamber, the door of which, as well as two others between that and the ſtair caſe, was ſhut, which prevented our hearing the buſtle made at the ſtreet door by the entrance of old De Malleville and his guard. He aſcended the ſtaircaſe in ſilence, and paſſing thro' the other rooms, burſt into that where we were on the point of ſtepping into bed. A countenance ſo known and ſo dreaded was like a ſtroke of thunder to us both. Old Gevres de Malleville! cried I, ruſhing towards my ſword. My attempt was fruitleſs: the guard ſeized me

before I could draw it. I was in my ſhirt, and farther reſiſtance was impoſſible.

Amidſt the confuſion of this ſcene, old De Malleville failed not to recollect both me and Manon. Is this an illuſion, cried he, or do I really behold the Chevalier des Grieux and Mademoiſelle L'Eſcaut? Overwhelmed with ſhame and grief, I anſwered not; but remained ſtupid and irreſolute, while old De Malleville ſeemed to ſtand meditating how to proceed: then, as if ſome particular recollection had lighted up the ſmothered rage in his boſom, he addreſſed himſelf to me; Wretch! you have deſtroyed my ſon! I am ſure of it! Piqued at this addreſs, I replied, know, thou old villain! that if I had been diſpoſed to deſtroy any of thy family

family, it is with thyſelf I ſhould have begun.

Suffer him not to eſcape, cried he to the archers: he ſhall give me inſtantly an account of what is become of my ſon, or I will have him hanged to-morrow morning. Thou wilt have me hanged, miſcreant! anſwered I; knoweſt thou not that I boaſt of blood, in compariſon of which thine is mean and inconſiderable? The gibbet is for wretches like thyſelf! I know what is become of your ſon; and if you irritate me farther, how are you ſure I ſhall not put an end to his life before to-morrow, and afterwards do as much for you?

Confeſſing that I knew where his ſon was, was the moſt imprudent thing I could

I could do: but the exceſs of my paſſion got the better of my recollection, and betrayed me into a falſe indiſcretion. Ah ha! Monſieur le Chevalier, ſaid De Malleville, you know where my ſon is, and you will deſtroy him: I believe I ſhall be able to prevent you this time. Then ſtepping to the door, he called five or ſix of the ſoldiers who were waiting below, and ordered them inſtantly to ſecure all the perſons in the houſe. Manon, who ſat all this while weeping on the bed, now attracted his attention: he approached her, and ironically felicitated her on the power of her charms, which had ſuch influence over the father and the ſon; he would even have proceeded to further impertinence, had I not ſaid fiercely to him, dare not touch her, execrable monſter! if thou doſt, be aſſured that nothing but my inſtant

inſtant death ſhall prevent my avenging it with thine: on which he quitted the room, leaving three of the fellows to guard us, whom he ordered to ſee that we put on our cloaths immediately.

I know not what were his firſt intentions. Perhaps he was diſpoſed to have releaſed us if we had told him where to find his ſon. While I was dreſſing, I conſidered whether I had not better do ſo: but he gave me but little time for deliberation; for whatever his deſigns were when he left us, the intelligence he gained below ſtairs, put an end to all the lenity he might at the beginning have propoſed. On enquiry of the ſervants who were ſecured, he found he could learn nothing from thoſe who had been lately hired for Manon by his ſon; but finding that Marcel had lived with

us ſome time, he determined to make him ſpeak; and the threats he uſed, made this man believe that the gibbet or the wheel was preparing for him. The remembrance of having been acceſſary to Manon's eſcape from the hoſpital, encreaſed his terrors; and his fidelity to us gave way before the fears he felt for his life: he therefore, after hearing with trembling all the menaces that De Malleville uſed to him, promiſed, on condition of pardon for himſelf, to tell all he knew.

The man's agitation alarmed De Malleville yet more, and made him ſuppoſe there was ſomething worſe in our affair than he had apprehended. He therefore aſſured Marcel, not only that his life ſhould be ſafe, but of a handſome recompence, if he would ſpeak the truth.

truth. Then he obtained from him an account of all the converſation he had heard between me and Manon, (as we had not ſcrupled ſpeaking while he waited on us, relative to our deſign). What had happened to young De Malleville he knew not; but he knew all the former part of our ſcheme, and had been inſtructed in the ſhare he was to have in it; and he told De Malleville that we either had or meant to cheat his ſon, and that Mademoiſelle had already received ten thouſand livres, which according to our ſcheme would never be reſtored to the heirs of the houſe of De Malleville.

After having received this account, the old man returned to us, trembling with rage, and going directly to a cabinet where he had been told the money and

and jewels were depoſited, he ſeized the caſket that contained them without difficulty; and approaching us, while he held in his hands what he called proofs of our robbery, he loaded us with reproaches; and ſhewing the pearls to Manon, he cried, while his eyes ſparkled with fury, ſee here, my pretty dear! do you know theſe again? What, they are to your taſte? Oh! I doubt it not! Poor things! continued he, in the moſt inſulting tone, they are really an amiable couple! it is a thouſand pities they are not ſtrictly honeſt!

My heart was now burſting with impotent rage. What would I not have given to have been at liberty one moment. At length I ſaid, with a moderation which aroſe from the dark deſpair that ſwelled in my ſoul, and which I could

could not expreſs, Let us leave theſe uſeleſs inſults, Monſieur: What is it you intend? What do you mean to do with us? My worthy Chevalier, anſwered he, what I mean to do is to ſend you both to the Chatelet this night: to-morrow will be a new day, and we ſhall ſee a little deeper into this affair; and I hope, before I have done with you, you will do me the favor to inform me how you have diſpoſed of my ſon.

It needed but little reflection to convince me that to be ſent to the Chatelet would be the moſt dreadful thing that could happen to us. Trembling for Manon more than myſelf, I foreſaw all the danger that threatened her: my pride and reſentment gave way before the alarming fears that I felt for her, and I reſolved, whatever efforts it coſt me, to

endeavour

endeavour to ſoften my enraged perſecutor. Aſſuming therefore an air of more civility, I beſought him to favor me with a moment's attention: I mean not to defend my errors, Monſieur, ſaid I; on the contrary I am ready to confeſs that youth and an indiſcreet paſſion have occaſioned my committing many faults; and that you particularly have great reaſon to complain of me: but if you have ever felt the force of love; if you have ever formed an idea of what the heart of an unhappy young man feels who ſees the ſole object of his affections torn from him, you may ſurely allow ſomething to the deſire of being revenged on a fortunate rival, to whoſe perſon however no injury has been committed; and for which I have ſurely ſuffered enough already. You need not employ puniſhment or impriſonment to gain intelligence

of

of your ſon. I had no deſign either to offend you, or hurt him. He is in ſafety: and if you will be ſo good as to diſmiſs us without farther trouble, I am ready to inform you of the place where I intended he ſhould have paſſed the night quietly.

The tyger-hearted old man, far from being moved with my penitence and humility, turned his back on me with ſcorn: he muttered to himſelf that he knew well enough what I intended; and then brutally ſaying, that for his ſon he ſhould find him eaſily, ſince I had not had him aſſaſſinated, he went out, directing the ſerjeant to carry us inſtantly to the Petit Chatelet; and as to the Chevalier, cried he, take great care he does not eſcape; he is a gentleman of contrivance, who has already got out of St. Lazare.

He

He left me in a ſituation of mind dreadful as imagination can conceive. Omnipotent Heaven! cried I, I could bear with patience and ſubmiſſion any evils inflicted by thee! but that ſuch a wretch as this ſhould have the power to render me miſerable, adds a bitterneſs to my ſufferings that drives me to deſperation. The men who were left in charge of us, now reminded us that they could not wait, and that a coach was at the door to receive us. I gave my hand to the weeping Manon, and led her down ſtairs. Come, my angel! ſaid I; come, we muſt ſubmit to our melancholy deſtiny: Heaven perhaps will yet have mercy on us, and permit us to ſee happier days.

They put us into the coach together; and Manon, who had been unable to ſpeak

ſpeak from the firſt entrance of De Malleville, now threw herſelf into my arms, and gave way to the violence of her emotions; accuſing herſelf of being the cauſe of this terrible misfortune that now was ready to overwhelm us. While you love me, Manon, ſaid I, I complain of nothing that happens to myſelf. A few months of impriſonment I regard not; and the Chatelet is leſs dreadful than St. Lazare. But for thee! for thee it is I feel! What a deſtiny for the moſt charming and beloved of women! And why does Providence permit that the moſt perfect of its works is thus decreed to taſte only of bitterneſs! Ah! why were we not born with ſouls conformable to our wretched fate! Why curſed with taſte and ſentiment, which ſerve only to make us feel all the miſery of our ſituation; while ſo many ſtupid, worthleſs

worthleſs, and unfeeling animals, are overwhelmed with bleſſings that they have not ſouls to enjoy!

Deplorable as was this picture of our paſt and preſent condition, what I feared for the future was infinitely worſe. The dread I was in on account of Manon was greater than I had yet felt; for I knew that a ſecond detection would for her be of the moſt fatal conſequence, and in all probability irretrievable. I would have told her my apprehenſions; but as there was no remedy, I knew not how to aggravate the terrors which ſhe already felt: I could only ſigh, and embrace her: and of all the emotions with which I was agitated, I dared expreſs only my love. Manon, ſaid I, tell me truly, will you ſwear ever to love me, and me only? She anſwered, that her unhappineſs

unhappineſs was augmented by my ſeeming to doubt it. Satisfied, anſwered I, with that aſſurance, I ſhall employ the credit of my family to get *me* out of the Chatelet; and my life and liberty ſhall both be dedicated to your releaſe.

We now arrived at the priſon, and were carried into ſeparate apartments, as indeed I had foreſeen. I recommended Manon to the keeper; and informed him, that as I was a perſon of rank, I ſhould recompence him in proportion to his attention. I embraced Manon before we were torn aſunder; and having luckily money enough about me, I gave Manon a part of it, conjured her to keep up her ſpirits as well as ſhe could, and to fear nothing while I was living to protect and defend her. With the money I had

I had remaining, I paid the keeper a month's pay, at the higheſt price for her and myſelf: and I found that my money had a good effect. They put me into a decent room, and aſſured me that Manon was in another as good.

As ſoon as I was alone, I began to conſider of the means of procuring my liberty, which I hoped would not be very difficult; for in fact there was nothing in what had happened actually criminal; and tho' an intention of cheating young De Malleville might be proved on the evidence of Marcel, yet mere intentions are not puniſhable. I determined to write to my father, beſeeching him to come to Paris to my relief. I was much leſs mortified at being at the Chatelet than at St. Lazare; and tho' I ſtill preſerved for my father all

all the reſpect he deſerved, time and experience had leſſened the extreme timidity with which my awe of him inſpired me in the earlier part of my life.

I ſat down and wrote a letter, which at the Chatelet they make no difficulty of ſending to the poſt. This was a trouble I might have ſpared myſelf had I known that my father arrived the next day at Paris. He had received the letter I had written to him eight days before, with extreme ſatisfaction; but he thought, notwithſtanding the profeſſions of returning to my duty with which it was filled, he could not ſafely depend on my promiſes; and therefore took the reſolution of aſſuring himſelf in perſon how far I might be truſted; and to regulate his conduct on the ſin-

cerity of my repentance. As ſoon as he got to Paris he went to Tiberge, whoſe direction I had ſent him, deſiring him to write to me under cover to him: but he was aſtoniſhed to find that he could inform him neither where I was, or what courſe of life I was in. He learned only the principal occurrences that had happened ſince I left St. Sulpice; and Tiberge ſpoke very advantageouſly of the diſpoſition I appeared to be in when he laſt ſaw me; adding, that he believed me wholly diſengaged from my connection with Manon; but that he was very much ſurpriſed that I had not called on him, or written to him, for the laſt week or ten days.

My father, who knew more of the world than Tiberge, judged rightly enough that there was ſomething at the bottom

bottom of all this that eſcaped his penetration, and that the ſilence on my part was owing to ſome particular circumſtance: in this perſuaſion he put ſo ſtrict an enquiry on foot, that he ſoon got intelligence of me, and two days after his arrival traced me to the Chatelet.

I was far from expecting a viſit from my father ſo ſoon: mean time I received one from the Lieutenant of the Police; or to ſpeak plainly, I underwent the interrogatory.

The Lieutenant of the Police, without either harſhneſs or inſult, made me ſome reproaches on my paſt adventures. He told me, but with gentleneſs, he lamented that my ill conduct had ſubjected me a ſecond time to the notice

of his tribunal; and that it was very ill judged to have created for myſelf ſo dangerous an enemy as old Gevres de Malleville: for tho' he believed there was more imprudence and folly, than real ill in my conduct, yet my frequent relapſes, which he had hoped a few months at St. Lazare would have prevented, obliged him to act with greater ſeverity than he wiſhed. Charmed to find my judge ſo favorably diſpoſed, I explained the laſt adventure in a manner ſo much to my advantage, and ſpoke with ſo much moderation and reſpect, that he ſeemed very well ſatisfied with my account of the matter, and with my behaviour towards him; and bid me not make myſelf very uneaſy in my preſent ſituation, for that my youth and family made him intereſt himſelf for me, and that he would ſoften my puniſh-

ment,

ment, and even end it as ſoon as he could with conſiſtency. This uncommon goodneſs on his part emboldened me to mention Manon to him, and to aſſure him that ſhe was naturally well diſpoſed and gentle tempered. He anſwered, ſmiling, that he had not yet ſeen her, and that ſhe had been repreſented to him as a dangerous object. At the mention of her a thouſand tender recollections ruſhed upon me; and while I expreſſed what I felt with the moſt paſſionate exclamation, my eyes were filled with tears. Our buſineſs being over, he ordered me back to my chamber. Oh Love! Love! cried this grave magiſtrate, as I withdrew, wilt thou ever be at variance with reaſon!

Melancholy, and abſorbed in reflecting on Manon, I remained ſome time

alone after the Lieutenant of the Police parted from me; when the door of my chamber opened, and I ſaw——my father!

Tho' I ſhould have been in ſome degree prepared for this viſit, which I expected a few days later, I was ſo ſtruck and ſhocked at the ſight of him, that I ſhould have been happy to have ſeen the earth open at my feet, and to have been able to hide myſelf in its deepeſt abyſs. I advanced however towards him, with every mark of confuſion in my countenance and manner: he put me gently back with his hand, and ſat down. We neither of us ſpoke. But as I continued to ſtand before him, with my eyes caſt down, and my countenance changing from red to pale, and from pale to red, he

he ſaid, coldly and gravely, " Sit down, " Sir: thanks to the ſcandal of your " impoſitions, and abandoned conduct, " I have diſcovered your abode. 'Tis " the peculiar advantage of merit like " yours, that it cannot be concealed. " You go to renown by an infallible " road, and I hope will ſoon reach the ne " plus ultra of fame at the grave, and " be a ſpectacle of wonder to the " world:"

I anſwered nothing, and he proceeded: Wretched is the father, who tenderly loving his ſon, and who having ſpared nothing to render him worthy and reſpectable, finds, inſtead of a ſon who ſhould be an honor and a comfort to him, a worthleſs and unprincipled wretch, who diſhonors his name, and

diſgraces his blood. All other ills of life are to be borne: adverſity is not without hope; time accuſtoms us to ſupport it, and blunts the ſting of common misfortune: but an unworthy and vicious child, loſt to all ſenſe of honor and rectitude, is an evil which grows every day more inſupportable, and can bring only increaſing deſpair to his unfortunate parents! Unhappy boy! what have you to ſay? Ah! who would not believe, from that modeſt air and ingenuous countenance, that inſtead of being the blot, you were the glory of your family.

Tho' I felt that I deſerved great part of theſe harſh reflections, my ſelf love made me think them too ſevere; and I believed I might without offence ſay ſo. Dear Sir! cried I, the humility with which

which I ſpeak to you is not hypocriſy. A ſon who reſpects and loves his father, and who is ſenſible that he has juſtly incurred his indignation, can act no otherwiſe. I pretend not to paſs for the moſt worthy member of our family: I know that I deſerve your reproaches; but I beſeech you not to overwhelm me with them. Do not treat me as if I were the moſt infamous of mankind. Imprudent as my conduct has been, I do not deſerve ſuch cutting language. You know that love has cauſed my errors; and ſurely in a young man it is not an unpardonable crime that he has been miſled by love. Have you not yourſelf known the force of that fatal paſſion? and is it poſſible that I derive my blood from you, and yet that you are of ſo different a temperament that you have never felt as I do? Love has made me too complying

to the caprices of an adored miſtreſs: that is the extent of my offence; and from thence all the diſhonor you complain of. Come, my dear Sir! continued I, you will I know have ſome conſideration for a ſon, who, whatever may have been his other faults, has always retained his reſpect and affection for you. A ſon who is more an object of pity than anger. Some tears fell from my eyes—my heart was full—I could ſay no more.

The heart of a father; of a worthy, a good father, is an aſſemblage of all the tendereſt ſentiments of nature. That of mine, (who beſides being the moſt affectionate of parents, was alſo a man of ſenſe, and had a cultivated mind) was ſo affected with the manner of my anſwer, that he could no longer conceal his emotion. Come, my poor Chevalier! cried he;

he; come to my arms. I pity you! I feel for you! He preſſed me to his heart in a way that made me judge of what was paſſing there. But my dear boy! how am I to get you from hence? ſaid he. Explain to me, without diſguiſe, the real ſtate of your affairs, that I may ſee what is to be done.

After all, there was nothing ſo very dark in my ſtory that I need fear to relate it. Compared with the conduct of many other young men, mine had not been ſo atrocious that I ſhould fear to acknowledge the worſt. In the age wherein we live, having been engaged with a miſtreſs I thought would not be deemed an heinous crime; and a little fineſſe at play has long been looked upon as a venial ſin at leaſt. I thought it beſt therefore to confeſs ingenuouſly to my father all that

that I had done: but as I repeated my offences, I took care to bring ſome example in my excuſe. I have lived, ſaid I, with a miſtreſs: but Monſieur le Duc de ——— lives with two, publicly; and Monſieur le ——— has entertained one theſe ten years, for whoſe ſake he has abandoned his wife and family. Two thirds of the men of faſhion in France are equally culpable. Then as to play, allowing I have occaſionally taken ſome advantages at it, do I not know that the Prince of ——— and the Marquis de ——— have no other reſources than thoſe they acquire by ſuch means: and the Prince of ——— and the Duc de ——— are heads of the Aſſociation to which I had the honor to belong. As to my deſigns on the purſes of the two Gevres de Mallevilles, beſides the excuſe I found in the provocation they gave me,

I could

I could have brought inſtances enough to ſhew that ſuch manœuvres were not without example among people of ſome conſideration.

But I had ſtill honor enough left to diſdain ſuch an apology for actions I could not approve; and therefore without attempting to palliate them, I acknowledged their diſgraceful tendency, and owned I had nothing to offer as an excuſe, but the violence of thoſe paſſions that agitated me: vengeance and love! When I had finiſhed what I had to ſay, my father aſked me again if I could tell him how to ſet about procuring my releaſe without noiſe, which he was anxious to avoid. I told him how favorably the Lieutenant of the Police had expreſſed himſelf towards me; and that if any difficulty was thrown in the way of my deli-

deliverance, it could come only from the family of De Malleville: but I imagined that if he would take the trouble to ſpeak to old De Malleville himſelf, there would be no longer any impediment to my liberation. He promiſed immediately to ſet about it; and I longed, but dared not venture to aſk him to ſolicit the ſame favor for Manon.

Tho' I had now acquired courage enough to ſpeak plainly to my father, I feared that ſuch a propoſal now, might give riſe to ſome reſolution fatal to us both. Perhaps this fear was the cauſe of the misfortunes that happened afterwards, by preventing my attempting to work on the tenderneſs of my father's nature; and at that time, when he was already ſoftened, to have excited his pity towards my unfortunate Manon. I might then have

have put him on his guard againſt the inveterate malignity of Gevres de Malleville:—malignity which made too deep an impreſſion. I do not know how I ought to have acted. Let me have done what I would, perhaps my evil deſtiny would equally have prevailed.

As ſoon as my father left me, he went to the houſe of Gevres de Malleville, and found him with his ſon, to whom the guard who had undertaken to ſecure him had given his liberty the next morning. What paſſed between my father and the two De Mallevilles at this converſation I know not; but the event of it was fatal to my happineſs.

The two fathers went together to the Lieutenant of the Police, of whom they deſired two favors: firſt, that he would imme-

immediately releaſe me from the Chatelet, and the next, that he would either confine Manon for life, or ſend her to America. It happened that juſt then a ſcheme was executing to tranſport a number of diſſolute and idle people to the Miſſiſipi; and the Lieutenant of the Police without heſitation gave his word that Manon ſhould be among the firſt. From the Police, my father and old Gevres de Malleville came to the Chatelet, and informed me I was free; and De Malleville made me a civil ſpeech on what had paſſed, and congratulated me on having ſuch a father, whoſe worthy example he hoped I ſhould for the future follow. My father ordered me to apologize to him for the injury which he pretended to have received, and thank him for procuring my releaſe: and we went out all together,

without

without any ones having named Manon; nor did I dare before them ſpeak to the keepers as I went out. Alas! my endeavours would have availed nothing: the cruel order came at the ſame time as that for my enlargement; and immediately after I left the Chatelet, my poor Manon was carried again to the hoſpital, and there confined with ſeveral unhappy women who were condemned to partake of the ſame puniſhment.

My father having obliged me to follow him to his hotel, and to remain ſome time with him, it was near ſix o'clock in the evening before I could find an opportunity of returning to the Chatelet; where, tho' I knew I ſhould not be permitted to ſee Manon, I thought I might leave a ſupply of money and neceſſaries for her, and recommend her to the keeper;

keeper; for I had not yet had time to reflect on the means of her deliverance.

I aſked to ſpeak to the maſter of the priſon; who, ſatisfied with my former liberality, was well diſpoſed towards me; in conſequence of which, he began by lamenting the fate of Manon, and told me how ſorry he was for the affliction it would give me. I did not at firſt comprehend him; and he talked for ſome time before he ſaw that I was ignorant of what had happened. He told me, therefore, what I have juſt repeated, that ſhe was at the hoſpital, in ſtrict confinement, and was from thence to be ſent to America. Never did the ſtroke of an apoplexy cauſe a more ſudden and terrible effect, than this news had on me. The circulation of my blood ceaſed;

my

my ſenſes forſook me; and as I felt them go, I hoped and believed it was for ever: and even after I began to regain them, ſomething of the ſame belief remained. I looked round the room, and upon my ſelf, trying to recollect what had happened, and enquiring whether I was ſtill unhappy enough to exiſt: and it is certain that the wiſh to be releaſed from inſupportable torments, made me at that moment think that nothing was ſo deſirable as death; and that the moſt horrid picture that could be drawn of future puniſhment, was preferable to the ſtate I was now in: but after a moment, I remembered that tho' to myſelf death would be a bleſſing, my life was ſtill neceſſary to Manon; for that I only could relieve her, and avenge her; and I ſwore that my life ſhould from that moment be dedicated to no other purpoſe.

The

The jailor gave me every aſſiſtance that I could have received from the tendereſt friend; and brought me to myſelf by his attention. Alas! cried I, affected by ſuch an inſtance of ſenſibility from ſuch a perſon; you! in this habitation of cruelty and inhumanity; you! who are accuſtomed hourly to the ſight of the unhappy, and to hear the cry of miſery, are yet more touched with my misfortunes than my friends; than even my father himſelf, whoſe barbarous hand has helped to wound me, and to make me the moſt miſerable of men. The man deſired I would not go out till I had recovered myſelf. Oh! yes! exclaimed I; I will go! I will go inſtantly! and you may prepare for me the darkeſt and deepeſt of your dungeons! I am going to do that which ſhall perhaps deſerve them! In fact, I had

had then no other idea than that of deſtroying the De Malleville, and of forcing myſelf into the hoſpital by means of ſuch friends as I could prevail on to accompany me. In my rage and impatience I know not whether my reflections did not reach even my father; for the jailor had told me that he had been concerned with Gevres de Malleville in procuring the order.

When I went out, I found the air gradually diminiſhed the tumult of my boiling blood, and my fury began to ſubſide. I conſidered that if I could execute all I had threatened, it would be of no uſe to Manon, and would have deprived me of the power of aſſiſting her. And ſhould I become an aſſaſſin? for by aſſaſſination only could I avenge myſelf of the De Malleville. All I had to do then was to collect my utmoſt reſolution and coolneſs, to attempt Manon's

Manon's releaſe, and to think only of that. Money was above all things neceſſary, and of that I had very little, and how to obtain it I knew not. I ſaw but three perſons from whom I could expect it; De Tiroux, my father, and Tiberge; from the two latter I could expect nothing, if they ſuſpected for what purpoſe I wanted it; and the former I was aſhamed to importune on ſuch an occaſion. However it was no time for ſcruples, and deſpair ſuffered me not to heſitate.

I went to St. Sulpice, without caring whether I was known there or not, and ſent for Tiberge, by whoſe diſcourſe I immediately diſcovered that he knew nothing of my laſt adventures. This made me change my deſign of attempting to move his compaſſion, and I only ſpoke in general of the ſatisfaction I felt

felt in being reconciled to my father; and I deſired him to lend me money to pay a few debts I had contracted, with which I did not wiſh my father ſhould be acquainted, and which I could not handſomely quit Paris without diſcharging. He gave me his purſe, to take what I would: I counted out the ſum of five hundred livres, for which I offered him my note; but he was too generous to accept it.

From thence I went to De Tiroux, with whom I had no reſerve. I related to him my misfortune in all its extent; with which indeed he was already acquainted, having never loſt ſight of me. He heard me however with attention, and expreſſed his concern; but when I aſked him if he could adviſe me how to procure the releaſe of Manon, he told me

me that he really ſaw ſo little probability of ſucceeding, that without a miracle in our favor it could not be hoped for: that he had been to the hoſpital himſelf to enquire for her, but was told that the orders given by the Lieutenant of the Police were ſo ſtrict, that nobody could be admitted to ſee her on any pretence whatever; and to compleat our deſpair, the perſons with whom ſhe was to go were to be ſent away the following day ſave one.

This diſcourſe took from me all power of anſwering; and he went on without interruption to tell me that he had not been to ſee me at the Chatelet, that he might be better able to ſerve me, in not appearing connected with me: and that the few hours ſince I had left it, he was ignorant where I was; but had extremely

extremely wiſhed to ſpeak to me, to give me the only advice in regard to Manon that he thought could be of any ſervice: but this advice was of a nature ſo dangerous, that he conjured me to conceal carefully that *he* had given it. It was to chuſe ſome deſperate fellows, who ſhould have reſolution enough to attack the guard ſet over this wretched company, as ſoon as it quitted Paris. He foreſaw the impediment that would ariſe for want of money, and without giving me time to anſwer him, he put into my hands a purſe containing an hundred piſtoles. This perhaps, ſaid he, may be of uſe to you: when you are eſtabliſhed in your fortune you ſhall repay me: mean time be aſſured it is much at your ſervice, and if my reputation permitted me to be ſeen in ſuch an affair, my arm and my ſword ſhould be equally at your command.

This friendly and generous procedure affected me extremely; and I thanked him in every term of acknowledgment that my depreſſed ſpirits left me the power to expreſs. I then aſked if he thought any thing could be done by interceſſion, with the Lieutenant of the Police? De Tiroux anſwered, that he had thought of it, but was afraid it would not avail; becauſe on what pretence could we aſk ſuch a favor of a grave and auſtere magiſtrate? Whatever hope there was, he thought, muſt be in trying to prevail on old Gevres de Malleville and my father to apply to him themſelves for a revocation of the ſentence; and offered his ſervices towards gaining young De Malleville: tho' he obſerved, that ſince our unfortunate manœuvre, he (young De Malleville) was grown very cool towards him, and

ſeemed

ſeemed to ſuſpect him of having been a party concerned. However he did not wholly deſpair of prevailing on him, and adviſed me to attempt perſuading my father.

Heavy was this taſk to me; not only becauſe I ſaw ſo very little hope of gaining my point, but becauſe I actually knew not how to approach him: for I had left his lodgings contrary to his poſitive orders; and I was determined, ſince I had heard the deſtiny of Manon, not to return thither again.

I had reaſon to believe, that on the leaſt ſuſpicion in regard to Manon he would confine me again, and carry me into the country by force, as he had done before: for tho' I was now no longer a child, I knew that my age was no

defence againſt force, exerted under parental authority. For this reaſon I could not think of hazarding my perſon in his hands; but reſolved to appoint a meeting with him in ſome public garden, and to announce myſelf to him as a ſtranger.

De Tiroux went to Gevres de Malleville, and I to the Luxembourgh; from whence I ſent a meſſage to my father, ſignifying that a gentleman of his acquaintance deſired the honor of a few moments converſation. As it was late, I doubted whether he would come: ſoon after, however, I ſaw him approach, attended by a ſervant; a precaution which ſuch a meſſage required. When we met, I deſired him to go with me to a retired part of the garden, and we walked about an hundred paces without

out ſpeaking. He gueſſed probably, that after ſo much preparation he ſhould hear ſomething extraordinary, and he waited in ſilence for the explanation I tremblingly meditated.

Sir! ſaid I, in a faultering voice, you are one of the beſt of fathers! you have forgiven my errors. I owe you eternal gratitude for all your goodneſs; and Heaven is my witneſs that my reſpect and affection for you is infinite. But ——in one inſtance——in one inſtance—— ſurely your ſeverity——your harſhneſs! Well, Sir! what of my ſeverity and harſhneſs? Speak! I am impatient to hear you!

Ah! my father! the rigour with which you have directed Manon, my poor unhappy girl to be treated, is

ſurely too much! You have liſtened to the miſrepreſentations of De Malleville, and have formed an idea of her wholly different from the truth. Why has it not pleaſed Heaven to inſpire you with an inclination to judge of her yourſelf? Were you to ſee her; inſtead of the character, ſuch as malignity has given her, you would find her to be the moſt amiable of human beings; a creature formed to captivate all hearts; and you would have patronized rather than have perſecuted her. The dark artifices of that infamous De Malleville would have had no effect. You would have had pity on her and me.

My father finding I went on in this paſſionate ſtrain, ſtopped me. Hold, Sir! whither does this diſcourſe tend? What would you have? My life! I aſk my

my life of you! which I will not keep if Manon is ſent to America! Die then! die! unhappy young man! I would rather ſee you carried to your grave, than that you ſhould live without honor!

Here then let us ſtop, ſaid I, taking him by the arm: relieve me from the burthen of an inſupportable life! In the deſpair into which you throw me, death will be an happineſs, and is a preſent worthy the hand of a father!

I ſhould give you only what you deſerve; and there are many fathers, replied he ſternly, who would not have waited ſo long to have put an end to your vicious exiſtence. But my weak, my exceſſive indulgence has ruined you!

I threw myſelf at his feet, and embraced his knees. Ah! if there yet remains one ſpark of that affection you once had for me, harden not your heart againſt me! Remember I am your ſon! Ah! remember my mother! my mother; whom you ſo tenderly loved! Would you have ſuffered *her* to have been torn from your arms? Would you not have defended her to death? And do you blame me for the ſame ſentiment? After having once had ſuch a paſſion, can you have forgotten what it is to love and to deſpair!

Dare not name thy mother, unworthy boy! The remembrance of her aggravates my ſufferings, in beholding her degenerate and abandoned ſon! Had ſhe lived till now, thy conduct would have deſtroyed her. But let us put an end to this converſation: I can ſupport it no longer,

longer; and it will effect no change in my reſolution. I am now going home, and I command you to follow me.

The ſeverity and anger with which he pronounced theſe words, convinced me he was inflexible. I even feared he would attempt to ſtop me himſelf, and oblige me to go with him. Going therefore ſome paces from him; do not, Sir! exclaimed I, do not drive me to deſpair! do not force me to diſobey you. It is impoſſible for me to follow you: ſtill more impoſſible for me to live if I am to be thus treated. Receive then my laſt farewel! Perhaps my death, which you will ſoon hear of, will reſtore my memory to your affections, and make you re-aſſume the feelings of a father!

He now ſaw me going. What then you refuſe to follow me? cried he, in a voice inarticulate with rage. Adieu then, ungrateful and rebellious ſon! Adieu! Adieu! barbarous and unnatural father! Thus I parted from him; parted from the beſt of fathers: and Heaven has puniſhed me; for we met no more!

Wild with deſpair, I ran like a madman to De Tiroux's houſe, imploring as I went the mercy of Heaven. Oh! celeſtial powers! be not as pityleſs as mankind! De Tiroux was not at home; but after waiting ſome moments he came in, and told me, with a melancholy air, that his negociation had ſucceeded no better than mine: he found young Gevres de Malleville leſs irritated than his father; but he

he refuſed to intereſt himſelf in our favor on pretence of not daring to renew his father's reproaches, whoſe vindictive ſpirit had not yet forgiven him for the expence he had incurred on account of Manon. Nothing therefore now remained for me but to try what could be done by force, as De Tiroux had propoſed; and on that deſperate undertaking reſted my only hope.

Alas! ſaid I to De Tiroux, my ſucceſs is very precarious; but I ſhall have however one conſolation; which is, that if my attempt fails I ſhall probably periſh in making it.

As ſoon as De Tiroux parted with me, I thought only of proper perſons to aſſiſt me: men to whom I hoped to impart a ſpark of the fury that poſſeſſed me:

me: and the propereſt that occurred to me was La Ferronaye, the life guard man, who had at my requeſt ſtopped young De Malleville. I went to him, and deſired he would give me leave to paſs the night in his room; for I had never thought of procuring myſelf a lodging, and it was now ſo late I knew not where elſe to go.

He expreſſed great pleaſure at ſeeing me once more at liberty, and offered me all the ſervices in his power. I told him how I was ſituated, and the aſſiſtance I wanted; and though he ſaw the various hazards that attended ſuch an undertaking, he was generous enough to engage in it, and ſanguine enough to believe he could ſurmount them.

We

We employed part of the night in digeſting our plan; and he ſeemed to think that the three ſoldiers who had before been of his party might be depended upon. De Tiroux had informed me, that the guards appointed for the waggons, in one of which Manon was to go, were only ſix; and we concluded that five of us, La Ferronaye, myſelf, and the three ſoldiers, would be equal to ſix men, who probably would conſult their own ſafety more than fulfilling their charge. As I had money enough, La-Ferronaye adviſed me to ſpare none to promote my ſucceſs. We muſt have horſes provided, ſaid he, and each of us his muſket and a brace of piſtols; all which, and ſome other preparations, he undertook to have ready the next morning; as well as to procure common cloaths for our ſoldiers, who dared not

appear

appear in the uniform of their regiment.

For the purpoſe of paying for theſe things, I gave him the hundred piſtoles that De Tiroux had lent me, and he expended the whole in procuring what he thought requiſite. The ſoldiers paſſed in review before me; and I endeavoured to animate them by promiſes; the better to confirm which, I gave each of them ten piſtoles.

The day of action being come, I ſent one of them very early to the hoſpital, that we might be quite ſure of the moment of the convoys departure from thence: and tho' this precaution ſeemed to ariſe from exceſs of anxiety, I afterwards found it abſolutely neceſſary. I thought it poſſible that ſome falſe

falſe information as to their route might have been given me; for I believed they were to embark at Rochelle, and that therefore I was miſinformed in being told I ought to wait for them on the road to Orleans. On the return of the ſoldier, however, I received poſitive aſſurances that this unhappy company were to be carried thro' Normandy, and to embark at Havre de Grace for America.

We took different ways to our rendezvous, which was to be without the gate St. Honoré. We met accordingly, with our horſes freſh and in good condition; and after waiting about ten minutes, we ſaw the waggons come ſlowly along, filled with the miſerable women you ſaw at Paſſy two years ago: a ſight that almoſt deprived me of my ſenſes. Oh fate! cried I; inexorable fate! which has

has hitherto purſued me! grant me victory, or complete your cruelty by my death! But let me not ſurvive and fail!

We conferred a moment on the beſt method of beginning our attack; and ſuffered the carriages to proceed about two hundred yards before us: I thought that by croſſing a little field, round which the road turned, we could throw ourſelves between the guard and the waggons; and La Ferronaye was of my opinion. I ſpurred on my horſe, eagerly, but my evil genius ſtill prevailed: The guard ſeeing five horſemen coming towards them, believed they ſhould be attacked, and turned to defend themſelves with a reſolute air: making ready their bayonets and pointing their pieces.

At this ſight, which only animated me and La Ferronaye to begin the attack, the three cowardly aſſociates loſt all diſpoſition to engage; and ſtopping, as if by agreement, turned their horſes round, and rode back towards Paris full ſpeed. La Ferronaye checked his horſe, and ſeemed as much hurt as I was at this deſertion. What are we about, ſaid he? 'Tis deſperation for us to think of attacking theſe ſix men. Rage and deſpair had deprived me of my voice. I ſtopped; not knowing whether I ſhould purſue the poltroons who had fled, or proceed to attack the guard: could I have done both, and had my power been equal to my rage, I ſhould have deſtroyed them all.

La Ferronaye who judged of what paſſed in my mind by the wildneſs of my eyes,

eyes, and the agitation of my whole frame, beſought me to hear him: As we are only two, ſaid he, it would be madneſs to attack theſe ſix men, who are as well armed as ourſelves, and ſeem determined to diſpute their ground: we muſt return to Paris, and endeavour to find other aſſociates who will better perform their engagements: theſe waggons can go but ſlowly, and we ſhall eaſily overtake them. I reflected a moment on this propoſal: but ſeeing only deſpair before me, I determined to embrace it in its moſt deciſive form; and diſmiſſing La Ferronaye, to beſeech the guard to receive me among them, and ſuffer me to accompany their unhappy charge to Havre, and thence to ſail to America.

All

All mankind, ſaid I to La Ferronaye, perſecute or betray me; and from henceforth I will depend on them no longer. I now expect nothing either from chance or aſſiſtance: my wretchedneſs is complete; and nothing remains but to ſubmit. I therefore relinquiſh all hope, and bid you adieu! May your kindneſs be rewarded; while I go to conſummate my undoing, and voluntarily throw myſelf into the abyſs before me! He exhorted me to think better of it, and to return to Paris: but I told him my reſolution was fixed, and begged him to leave me immediately, leaſt the guard ſhould believe we ſtill meditated an attack.

He departed: and I rode ſlowly up to the guard, with an air of ſo much ſorrow, and ſuch conſternation in my face,

face, that they could not think me a very formidable enemy; yet they ſtill ſeemed to ſtand upon their defence. Make yourſelves eaſy, gentlemen, ſaid I, addreſſing them; ſo far am I from coming to you with hoſtile intentions, that I come to aſk a favour of you: go on without apprehenſion, and I will tell you my requeſt. When they knew what I deſired, they conſulted together a moment, and then he who ſeemed to be the principal among them, ſaid in the name of them all, that although the orders they had received in regard to their priſoners were extremely ſtrict, I appeared to be ſo much of a gentleman that they would venture to relax a little in my favor; but as they ran a riſk, and incurred a hazard of puniſhment if it ſhould be known, they ſhould expect to be paid for it.

I had

I had no more than about fifteen piſtoles in my purſe, and I told him ſo. Well, anſwered he, we will be reaſonable; it ſhall coſt you no more than a crown an hour, to entertain which ever of our ladies you like beſt; and that, you know, is but the common price of Paris.

I had concealed my particular attachment, and he believed it was merely a youthful frolic that induced me to deſire to be admitted among thoſe unfortunate creatures; but as ſoon as he diſcovered the violence of my paſſion for Manon, he roſe in his demands ſo much, that when we left Mante the morning before we arrived at Paſſy, my money was quite gone.

How

How ſhall I repeat to you my converſation with Manon during this melancholy journey; or how communicate what I felt on the firſt ſight of her in ſo deplorable a condition!

I obtained leave of the guard to approach cloſe to the waggon where ſhe was. Ah! what words can do juſtice to my feelings at that moment! She ſat on a little ſtraw, with a heavy chain round her waiſt; her head leaning againſt the ſide of the waggon: her face was pale, and wet with tears, which ſlowly fell from under her eye-lids, for her eyes were cloſed. Her dreſs was neglected, and expreſſive of her unhappy ſtate: her lovely hair hung looſely over her face and ſhoulders: that beauteous face, and thoſe delicate arms expoſed to the inclemency of the weather! The angelic form, lately

ſo

ſo brilliant and blooming, had loſt its luſtre; but amidſt all this overwhelming miſery, the ſweetneſs and ſoftneſs of her countenance ſtill remained. The elegance of her frame was viſible even in ruins.

Overcome by her ſufferings, ſhe no longer noticed any thing. She opened not her eyes, notwithſtanding the noiſe made by the guard when they apprehended our falling on them; and when I joined them, I rode for ſome time by her ſide, gazing on her with ſenſations of ſuch horror that I was ſeveral times in danger of dropping from my horſe; but ſhe ſaw me not. At length the deep ſighs and groans that burſt from my ſwelling heart caught her ear: ſhe knew my voice; opened her eyes, and ſaw me; and making a ſudden effort, would have thrown

thrown herſelf out of the waggon to come to me; but being torn back by the chain, ſhe fell again into her former poſture. I beſought the guard to ſtop, thro' pity, and they conſented, thro' avarice: then I left my horſe, and ſat down by her; but ſhe was ſo weak and reduced that it was long before ſhe could ſpeak or move her hands, which I held in mine, and wet with my tears.

For ſome moments we could neither of us expreſs our mournful ſentiments; and when Manon attempted it, her voice was ſo faint that ſhe could not articulate her words. In tremulous and broken accents ſhe tried to ſay that ſhe thanked me for not having forgotten her; for being ſo good as to let her ſee me once more before ſhe died: but when I proteſted that nothing ſhould divide us more;

more; but that I would attach my deſtiny wholly to her's, follow her to America, and give up the reſt of my life to protect and ſerve her, the violent emotions of her gratitude and tenderneſs quite overcame her, and I feared fatal conſequences would have followed. Not being able to ſpeak, all the affections of her ſoul ſeemed concentered in her eyes, which ſhe fixed on me with a look I ſhall never forget. The imperfect words ſhe uttered, meant to expreſs her ſenſe of ſuch uncommon love, and her wonder how I could forgive her for all the miſery ſhe had brought upon me: and then, after a ſhort pauſe, ſhe endeavoured to collect ſtrength to entreat me to leave her to her fate, and to ſeek elſewhere the happineſs I ſo well deſerved. Dreadful as was the extremity to which we were reduced, yet to look on her, to

hear her ſay ſhe loved me, was happineſs which I would not have exchanged for any bleſſing proſperity could give. I had loſt all that mankind calls good; but the heart of Manon was mine, and I envied nobody. Whether I lived in Europe or America, was a matter of indifference if I could but live with her: wherever ſhe was, was my country; and I thought any part of the univerſe would afford an aſylum to two ſuch hearts as our's. But the fear of encountering the hardſhips of extreme penury, was ſtill terrible when I conſidered the weakneſs and delicacy of Manon. I repreſented to myſelf our ſituation in an uncultivated region, where the conveniencies of life are wholly unknown, and even its neceſſaries hard to be procured among the ſavage inhabitants. What was to become of Manon? And yet, ſaid I, thoſe ſavages are leſs inhuman than

than my father and old De Malleville: they will not divide us, for they know no laws but thoſe of nature: their hearts are not hardened by avarice like De Malleville's, or debauched by a falſe principle of imaginary honor, like that of my father. I ſhould therefore, I thought, be content to live with them, far from a country where I had experienced only cruelty and injuſtice; but how ſhould I procure for Manon the decencies, or even the abſolute requiſites of life? I knew from ſad experience how dreadful it was to ſee a beloved object ſuffering under poverty; and I trembled to think of what ſhould become of her. The little money I had, would be gone by the extortion of the guard long before I could reach Havre; but I imagined that by obtaining a ſmall ſupply, I might be able to do ſomething in America, where money

is ſcarce, that would procure us a ſubſiſtence. This conſideration made me write to Tiberge from the firſt town we ſtopped at: I told him I was going to Havre with Manon, whoſe unhappy ſentence he had heard: but I cannot, ſaid I, part with her without making every effort to ſoften the horrors of her fate; and ſituated as ſhe now is, you ſee, Tiberge, it will be the laſt time I ſhall have occaſion to importune you, either on her behalf or my own: enable me then to adminiſter to her ſuch comforts as her wretched ſituation will allow; and it will diminiſh the regret and remorſe that will for ever prey on my heart. I deſired him to direct to me at the poſt-houſe at Havre.

The guard had by this time re-doubled their demands; for they ſaw that my attachment

attachment was ſuch as left me no conſideration for any thing but Manon. Time was no longer meaſured by hours. I ſat whole days beſide her, ſupporting her, and trying to re-animate her ſinking ſpirits with hopes I did not feel myſelf: but the time I paſſed thus, coſt me ſo much, that my purſe was ſoon empty; and then I ſaw myſelf expoſed to the brutality of thoſe unfeeling wretches, who treated me with inconceivable inſolence. You was a witneſs to their inhumanity at Paſſy, where your generous pity was ſo ſeaſonably exerted in my favor, and enabled me to go on much leſs wretchedly; for the guard, in conſequence of what you were ſo good as to ſay to them, kept their word better than I dared hope, till we reached Havre.

As ſoon as we arrived there, I went to the poſt houſe, but found no letter; indeed there had not been time for it. I anxiouſly enquired when I might hope for one? but was told that no anſwer could in the courſe of the poſt be expected till the ſecond day from that on which I applied; and by the unlucky fatality that ſtill followed me, the wind was fair, and we were ordered to go inſtantly on board; the captain propoſing to weigh anchor at day break the next morning.

At this intelligence, which muſt cut off every hope of my obtaining the ſupply I expected, I cannot expreſs the extremity of my deſpair. How! cried I, even in miſery itſelf am I to be diſtinguiſhed by its exceſs! Manon anſwered me languidly, "Why againſt

"ſuch

" ſuch a deſtiny do we longer attempt
" to ſtruggle! Is a life doomed to
" wretchedneſs worth the trouble of pre-
" ſerving? Let us die, my Chevalier!
" let us die here! let us not go to drag
" on a miſerable exiſtence in a diſtant
" country, where more dreadful extremes
" of miſery undoubtedly await us, ſince
" they ſend me thither to puniſh me!
" Ah no! let us die here! or rather do
" you put an end to my being as a laſt
" act of kindneſs; as the only thing you
" can now do for me; and live yourſelf
" to be reſtored to your family and for-
" tune in the arms of an happier and
" more deſerving woman, who ſhall
" make you forget your poor undone
" Manon!"

No! ſole treaſure of my heart! anſwered I, think not that for a moment I repent

of my deſign! I prefer miſery with you, to happineſs with another! I ſaw her ſinking under the preſſure of her ſorrows, and trembling leaſt death ſhould rob me of her for ever, I exerted myſelf anew to put on an air of tranquility; in which, whatever ſtruggles it coſt me, I determined to perſevere; and I found that nothing ſo effectually reſtores the weak and deſponding ſpirit of a woman, as the appearance of fortitude and reſolution in the man ſhe loves.

Having loſt all hope of receiving Tiberge's aſſiſtance in time, I ſold my horſe; and the money I procured for it, together with what remained of your liberality, made up together the ſum of ſeventeen piſtoles. I laid out ſeven in procuring ſuch things as I thought

Manon

Manon would find moſt neceſſary during the voyage, and carefully put up the other ten, as the foundation of our hopes in America. No difficulty was made in regard to taking me on board; for orders had been given to engage any young people willing to ſeek their fortune in the new world: my paſſage and proviſions therefore were allowed me. I left a letter at the poſt houſe for Tiberge, couched in terms that were certainly very affecting; ſince it occaſioned him to take a reſolution that only the warmeſt and tendereſt feelings for my ſufferings could have inſpired.

At the time propoſed, the wind being ſtill fair, we weighed and got under ſail. The captain, who ſeemed to be a

good kind of man, ſeeing that Manon and I appeared to have been in an higher ſtation of life than our unfortunate aſſociates, ſhewed us ſomewhat more attention; and as ſoon as we were on board, I took him aſide, and told him as much of our hiſtory as I thought would intereſt him in our favor; to which I added, (what I think was a falſehood our circumſtances juſtified;) that we were married. He pretended to believe it; allotted us a ſmall cabin apart; and throughout the whole voyage we received marks of his kindneſs and good-nature.

My time and attention was given to leſſen the inconveniencies of our ſituation to Manon, and ſhe was deeply affected by my watchful tenderneſs. I ſaw her more paſſionate, more attached

to

to me than ever; and there was between us a perpetual conteſt of love. I no longer regretted Europe, or lamented the loſs of my friends and country; but the nearer we approached to the coaſt of America, the more tranquil I found myſelf; and could I only have been ſure that the neceſſaries of life would have been found for Manon, I ſhould have been even grateful to Heaven for ſo favorable a turn in our affairs.

After being at ſea about two months with favorable weather, we ſaw the ſhore to which we were bound, and our firſt view of it gave us but a melancholy impreſſion. It appeared to be a barren, uninhabited country, whoſe only verdure was a covering of weeds and ruſhes; and thinly ſcattered, ſtood a few trees, already ſtripped by the wind, tho' it was

yet

yet only the beginning of autumn. Neither men or cattle appeared about the beach; but the captain having fired two guns, we ſoon afterwards ſaw a ſmall body of people appear (inhabitants of New Orleans,) who teſtified their ſatisfaction on ſeeing the ſhip; and when we landed, received us as brethren come to ſhare their baniſhed and forlorn ſtate; and as we walked with them to their town, which we had not ſeen from the ſea, as it lay behind a riſing ground, they aſked numberleſs queſtions on the ſtate of France when we left it; and each anxiouſly enquired after the events of the particular province of which he was a native.

When we drew near New Orleans, I was ſurpriſed to find that what I had heard deſcribed as a conſiderable town, was

was really nothing more than a number of wretched huts, irregularly thrown together, and inhabited by between five and ſix hundred perſons. The governor's houſe appeared to be ſomewhat better than the reſt; and was conſpicuous from being ſituated on the higheſt part of the town, defended by a breaſt work of earth, and ſurrounded by a deep ditch.

We were preſented to the governor immediately on our arrival; who ſpoke ſome time with the captain alone, and then came to look on the women brought in his veſſel. There were thirty of them: for after you ſaw us, another party joined us at Havre. The governor, after ſome reflection, directed ſeveral young men of the town to be ſent for, and the prettieſt of the women he gave to them for wives;

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

He invited us to ſup with him; during which repaſt I found his manners and converſation ſuperior to what I expected from the governor of a few unhappy exiles. He forbore to aſk us any particular queſtions, as his nephew and others were preſent; and the converſation was general; in which, fatigued and uneaſy as we were, Manon and I exerted ourſelves to appear to advantage. When ſupper was over, he ordered us to be conducted to the houſe he had had prepared for us; where we found a miſerable hovel, built of planks and mud, containing three ſmall diviſions on the ground floor, with a granary above them; whither the governor had ſent three or four chairs, a table, a bed, and a few other neceſſaries.

At the ſight of this diſmal abode, Manon

Manon was terrified; and as ſoon as we were alone, ſat down and wept bitterly. But I underſtood that it was for me alone ſhe felt: that ſhe was ſhocked only to think of what I muſt ſuffer in a ſtate ſo diſtant from that to which I was born; and that ſhe again accuſed herſelf for having been the cauſe of my feeling this dreadful reverſe of fortune. I affected therefore an air of indifference as to our habitation, and aſſumed the appearance of chearfulneſs. What have I to complain of? Manon, ſaid I: do not you love me; and is not that all that is neceſſary for my happineſs!

Truſt to Providence, my angel; and be aſſured we ſhall find our circumſtances leſs deſperate than we expected. The governor you ſee treats us with civility, and diſtinguiſhes us from the reſt. He will

will not ſuffer us to want ſupport: and as to the poor appearance of our cabin, and the meanneſs of our furniture, what does it ſignify? Nobody here is better provided: and beſides you are an admirable chymiſt, who have the art of turning every thing about you into gold.

Ah! how rich would you be if I had! returned ſhe. As there never was love ſuch as your's, ſo it is impoſſible that gratitude and tenderneſs can exceed what I feel for you. I now know myſelf well. I know, that far from having deſerved your generous attachment, I have been guilty of faults and errors which you alone could have forgiven: and tho' I have always moſt entirely and truly loved you, I have been ungrateful, and unworthy ſuch an heart

no jealouſy embitters it; but love reigns alone in all his charms. Let others ſeek gold in the new world, we have found an happineſs, compared to which all other treaſures are poor.

We aſſiduouſly cultivated the governor's good opinion; and after a few months, he had the goodneſs to give me a ſmall employment in the fort, that became vacant; not very profitable indeed, but enough to enable us to live without being troubleſome to any body. I took a ſervant for Manon, and a valet for myſelf. Our little houſhold aſſumed a ſettled appearance: our conduct was regulated, and our time paſſed tranquilly. We were ever happy in an opportunity of affording aſſiſtance to our neighbours; which friendly diſpoſition, and the ſoftneſs of our manners, acquired

quired us the eſteem of the whole colony; and we were conſidered next to the governor and his nephew as the principal perſons in it.

Innocent and peaceable as our days now paſſed, it inſenſibly brought back to our minds thoſe ideas of religion in which we had both been educated. Never, amidſt all my libertiniſm, had I been guilty of impiety, or added a renunciation of my principles to the corruption of my manners. Paſſion and inexperience alone had been the cauſe of our errors, and not depravity of heart.

We were indeed ſtill young; Manon being only in her twenty-firſt year, and I only two years older: but our ſufferings had the effect of age, and had taught

taught us to reflect. Our converſation continually took a ſerious turn; and we were inſpired with an inclination to ſanctify our union by marriage. I propoſed it to Manon, whoſe heart I knew was candid and ſincere; qualities which ever lead to virtue. I told her that nothing was now wanting to our happineſs, but that Heaven ſhould approve it. Our hearts are not formed, ſaid I, to live in continual violation of our duty: for though we did ſo in France, where we could neither be legally united, or ceaſe to love, yet here we depend only on ourſelves.

Every tie is broken that might impede our union: we have nothing now to do with the arbitrary and chimerical diſtinction of rank: we are ſuppoſed to be already married; and what ſhould prevent

vent our being really ſo. Why ſhould we not ennoble our attachment by going thro' the ceremonies our religion demands of us. I offer you nothing new in offering you my heart: but I am ready to renew the gift at the foot of the altar. My diſcourſe ſeemed to give Manon the livelieſt pleaſure. Would you believe, my Chevalier, ſaid ſhe, that this thought has been continually in my mind ſince we came to America; but the fear of diſpleaſing you prevented my ſpeaking. How do I dare aſpire to the honor of being your wife!—I, who am ſo unworthy of you! Ah! Manon; you know if I were a monarch you might aſpire to a throne; let us heſitate no longer; we have no obſtacle to fear; and I will today go to the governor and acknowledge that we have hitherto deceived him. Let vulgar lovers dread an indiſſoluble band;

we

we fear it not; ſure as we are that love will never ceaſe to dreſs it with flowers.

I am perſuaded there is not in the world a man of honor and feeling who would not have approved of my deſign, ſituated as I was; ſubjected to a paſſion I could not conquer, and contending with remorſe I ought not to ſtifle. Shall I then be thought to murmur too much if I accuſe Heaven of exceſs of cruelty? if I lament the rigor of thoſe judgments which ordained that the deſigns I had formed to make myſelf acceptable to the Supreme Being were ſuffered to produce only anguiſh and deſpair? I know not where I ſhall find ſtrength to relate the horrid cataſtrophe that is approaching.

After the converſation that I have juſt related with Manon, I went to the governor to deſire him to conſent to our marriage: this however I ſhould not have done, if I had dared to flatter myſelf that his almoner who, was the only prieſt in the town, would do me the kindneſs to perform the ceremony without his leave: but knowing I could not hope for his ſecrecy or compliance, I thought it better to make no myſtery about it. I found the governor accompanied only by his nephew; and as I had no reaſon to conceal what I had to ſay from him, I addreſſed myſelf to his uncle in his preſence; I recounted a part of my hiſtory, to which he liſtened with complaiſance, and when I beſought him to conſent to what I aſked, he not only aſſured me of his ready concurrence, but that he would himſelf be at the expence of the feſtival

which he would order in honor of the wedding. I went home well content with the ſucceſs of my embaſſy.

The nephew of the governor, whoſe name was Synnelet, was extremely beloved by his uncle, whoſe only relation he was. He was about thirty years old; brave, but paſſionate and violent. He was unmarried; and I found afterwards that the charms of Manon had ſtruck him the moment he ſaw her: and the frequent converſation he had had with her ſince, and the extreme beauty which returning health had reſtored to her, had inflamed his paſſion to a violent exceſs; but he had concealed it, believing as every body elſe did, that ſhe was really my wife.

But he was no ſooner undeceived than he

he threw off all reſtraint. I had been about an hour returned home, when the governor's almoner came in, as I imagined, to give me ſome advice previous to my marriage: but after a cold compliment, he told me in a few words that he waited on me by the governor's order, to let me know I muſt think no more of marrying Mademoiſelle Manon, as the governor had other views for her.

Other views for Manon! exclaimed I, Monſieur L'Aumonier! What views? He anſwered, dryly, that I knew that Mademoiſelle Manon was ſent thither for the Colony, and therefore the governor had a right to diſpoſe of her: believing us married, he had forborne to exert his power; but now, as I owned we were not,

he thought proper to give her to Monſieur Synnelet, who was in love with her.

My paſſion now again conquered my prudence. Regardleſs of their power, I fiercely ordered the almoner to go out of my houſe; and told him, that whether Manon was my wife or my miſtreſs, neither the governor, Synnelet, nor the whole colony united, ſhould dare to take her from me.

I was obliged to communicate to Manon the ill omen'd meſſage I had received; and from many circumſtances that we now recollected, we concluded that Synnelet had long had an intention of appropriating her to himſelf, but could not till now find an opportunity of ſeducing his uncle's integrity. But what

what was to be done? He was powerful; we were totally in his power; and were at New Orleans as in a deſart; having no reſource or protection againſt his tyranny. Through the dreary country which ſurrounded us, it was impoſſible to eſcape; and though the inhabitants were attached to me, I dared not hope their ſuccour could redreſs me: money would be neceſſary to influence them, and I was poor: but even if I could have prevailed on them to revolt in my favor, which was next to impoſſible, their ſucceſs was more than hazardous; and the failure of ſuch an attempt would only encreaſe my misfortune. Theſe ſchemes paſſed rapidly thro' my mind. I communicated them to Manon, and then, without waiting her anſwer, formed others. I thought firſt of one thing, then of another, but could determine on

nothing in a ſituation ſo ſingular that I had neither experience or example to aſſiſt my reſolution.

Manon, who attentively watched my eyes and the expreſſion of my countenance, ſaw the misfortune that threatened us in all its extent; but the agitation ſhe ſaw me in was ſuch, that ſhe trembled to encreaſe it by expreſſing her fears. After many abortive deſigns, I determined to go to the governor, and try to move his pity, by reminding him of his former regard for me, and the reſpect I had ever teſtified towards him: but Manon oppoſed my going, and with tears ſaid, Des Grieux, you are going to your death! I ſhall ſee you no more! Ah! rather let me die in your arms, and my life will ſtill end happily! but do not, I implore you, do not leave me! With great difficulty

difficulty, however, I prevailed upon her to conſent to my going, and aſſured her I would almoſt immediately return to her. Ah! it was not my life, but her's that Heaven demanded! That lovely and tender victim alone could be accepted as an atonement for our offences!

I went to the fort, and found the governor with his almoner. I humbled myſelf before him to a degree that the whole world ſhould not have bribed me to do if Manon had not been concerned. I conjured him by every entreaty likely to move an heart which was not made of adamant, to compaſſionate me: but he was immovable; and I could obtain no other anſwer than that "he was "maſter of Manon, and that he could "not break the promiſe given to his "nephew." Still I determined to keep

my deſpair within bounds, while moderation was likely to be of uſe; and I only ſaid, on taking leave, that I could not believe him cruel enough to deſire to deprive me of my life, to which I would much ſooner conſent than to the loſs of Manon.

I was too well convinced I had nothing to hope for from this obſtinate old man, who was ſo prejudiced in behalf of his nephew that he would have encountered perdition to gratify any wiſh of his. Notwithſtanding which, I reſolved to continue acting with all the coolneſs I could command; determined, if they carried their injuſtice to the laſt exceſs, to make in America one of the moſt tragical ſcenes that love and deſpair had ever occaſioned.

I was

I was returning home, meditating on what I had to do, when Fate, determined to haſten my ruin, threw Synnelet in my way; who eaſily read in my looks what paſſed in my ſoul. I have already ſaid he had courage, which he was now determined to ſhew. Coming up to me with a fierce and menacing air, he ſaid, "Do you look for me? I know my "deſigns are offenſive to you; but ſince "I will not relinquiſh them, it will be "neceſſary for us to meaſure our "ſwords. Come then, let us ſee who is "to be the happy poſſeſſor of Manon."

I anſwered, that he was right; for that nothing but my death would oblige me to reſign her. We then retired together a ſhort diſtance from the town, and drew our ſwords. I wounded and diſarmed him in an inſtant, which enraged him ſo

much that he refuſed to aſk his life, and to renounce for ever all pretenſions to Manon.

I ſhould perhaps have been juſtified in taking it from him; but noble blood ſcorns to diſgrace itſelf by taking an ungenerous advantage. I threw him his ſword. Let us begin again then, ſaid I; and remember it is to be deciſive. He then attacked me with incredible fury; and as I was by no means expert at the ſword, (having had only three months practice at Paris) he in his turn ran me thro' the arm; but in conſequence of this advantage, and of his increaſing paſſion, he grew ſo unguarded, that preſſing on him, I gave him a fatal lunge, and run him quite through the body: he ſtaggered a few paces, and fell motionleſs at my feet.

Tho'

Tho' my firſt emotion was that of joy at my victory, yet I reflected almoſt immediately on its conſequences, and conſidered that I ſhould be puniſhed without mercy, and without delay. Knowing the infatuation of the governor for his nephew, I doubted not but that I ſhould meet with inſtant death as ſoon as that of Synnelet ſhould be known. Nor was that the worſt of my fears: Manon, abandoned and friendleſs, in a deſolate country, was an idea infinitely more dreadful; ſo much ſo, that it almoſt deprived me of my ſenſes, and made me careleſs of my immediate ſafety.

I hung in ſilent horror over the corps before me, whoſe ſtate I envied; for had his lot been mine I had been delivered from all my miſeries. However the thought that

that occaſioned my greateſt uneaſineſs, at length rouſed me to take ſome reſolution. How! cried I to myſelf, ſhall I die to eſcape from preſent evil? Is there any evil then greater than the loſs of her I love? Ah! let me brave every danger to aſſiſt my unhappy girl! it will be always time enough to die, when I have attempted every thing in vain!

I went home; where I found Manon half dead with fear and anxiety. At my preſence ſhe revived; but the terrible accident that had happened, and which I could not conceal from her, threw her into an agony of terror. Before I had finiſhed my relation of the death of Synnelet, and the wound I had received, ſhe fell almoſt lifeleſs into my arms; and it was more than a quarter of an hour before her ſenſes returned.

I was

I was myſelf half dead: I ſaw not the leaſt probability of ſecurity for either of us. Manon, ſaid I, as ſoon as ſhe ſeemed a little recovered, what ſhall we do? Alas! Whither ſhall we go? It is neceſſary that I immediately quit the town. Will you ſtay in it? Ah, yes! ſtay! ſtay! I beſeech you! you may yet be happy! while I will go to meet death among the ſavages of the deſart, or in the jaws of ſome ferocious animal! Weak and trembling, ſhe aroſe, and catching me eagerly by the hand, led me to the door. Let us fly, ſaid ſhe: the corps of Synnelet may already have been found, and we may a moment hence have no time to eſcape. But my ſoul! replied I, wildly, whither! whither can we go? What reſource have we? Would it not be better for you to endeavour to live here without me, while I offer

I offer myſelf a voluntary victim to the governor's fury? This propoſal only augmented her anxiety to depart. She went out, and I followed her, having ſo much preſence of mind left as to put a bottle or two of ſpirits in my pockets, and as much proviſion as they would hold. We told our ſervants we were going out for our evening walk; and we hurried out of the town much faſter than I could have ſuppoſed Manon able to walk.

Though I was ſtill in the moſt painful irreſolution where to go, two feeble rays of hope broke a little the gloomineſs of my deſpair; without the aſſiſtance of which I ſhould have preferred inſtant death to the dread of what might befall Manon: While I had been in America I had acquired

acquired ſome knowledge of the country, and was acquainted with the manner in which the Indian nations are conciliated; and I knew I might with certain precautions put myſelf into their hands without meeting certain deſtruction. I had learned a little of their manners and cuſtoms, and ſomething of their language, in the frequent opportunities I had had of ſeeing them trading at New Orleans; and added to this melancholy reſource, I had hopes of another, which was from the Engliſh, who have, as well as ourſelves, ſettlements in that part of America. But when I conſidered that to reach their colonies we muſt traverſe immenſe deſarts, unknown to cultivation, and go for many days thro' woods, never paſſed but by the wandering Indians, and over ſteep and almoſt inacceſſible mountains, a journey which

the

the moſt robuſt man would ſhrink from, my heart died within me: however as there was no remedy, I tried to flatter myſelf that by means of the Indians there was a poſſibility of reaching the habitations of the Engliſh, by whom I knew I ſhould be hoſpitably received, and humanely treated.

We walked on as long as Manon's ſtrength would permit: I believe about ſix miles; for ſhe courageouſly refuſed to ſtop, as long as ſhe could ſupport herſelf. Overcome at length with fatigue, ſhe was forced to acknowledge ſhe could go no farther. We were then in the midſt of an immenſe plain, which did not afford even a tree to ſhelter us: we ſat down, however, and her firſt care was to change the linen ſhe had haſtily

haſtily applied to my wound. It was in vain I oppoſed this needleſs care.

I ſhould have overwhelmed her with ſorrow if I had refuſed to ſuffer her to attend to my eaſe before ſhe thought of her own: I therefore ſubmitted for ſome moments to her tender attention, and ſilently ſubmitted to her application of the remedies wherewith ſhe had furniſhed herſelf. But when her affection had had its courſe, with what ardor did I not return it! I took off my cloaths to ſpread them under her, that ſhe might not ſuffer from the dampneſs of the ground; and notwithſtanding her entreaties, obliged her to let me uſe every means to make her ſituation leſs inconvenient. I warmed her hands with ſighs and kiſſes; and making my knees her pillow, I prepared to watch over her

my puniſhment yet inſufficient, has decreed that I ſhall continue to drag on a languiſhing and painful exiſtence!

For above four and twenty hours after her death, I remained with my face cloſe to her cold cheek. I meant to die, and never to quit that poſture. But on the beginning of the ſecond morning, I remembered that when I was dead the body of my beloved miſtreſs might become the prey of wild beaſts. I determined to bury her, and wait for death on her grave. I was already ſo exhauſted by grief and want of food, that it was with infinite efforts I aroſe from the ground. I was obliged to have recourſe to the cordials I had brought with me, and was refreſhed enough to enable me to begin the mournful office.

The whole plain being a bed of deep ſand, I found it eaſy to dig, and I broke my ſword to remove it; but found my hands more ſerviceable; and with great labour, as my weakneſs obliged me often to ſtop, I at length made a deep grave; and having wrapped all my cloaths round her, to prevent the ſand from touching her, I placed in it the idol of my ſoul; after having embraced her a thouſand times, and ſpeaking to her as if ſhe was yet alive. But having depoſited her in it, I ſtill hung over her, being unable to ſummon reſolution enough to throw the earth upon her. Feeling however my weakneſs return, I feared that death might prevent my performing for her this laſt ſad ſervice: therefore collecting all my ſtrength and reſolution, I began to fill the grave, and bury in the boſom of the earth the loveliеſt and moſt amiable

ble creature it had ever boaſted. Having done this, I laid down on the grave, with my face turned towards the ſand which covered her, and ſhutting my eyes in the hope to open them no more, I implored of Heaven ſpeedily to ſend me the death I ſo ardently wiſhed for.

During all this terrible ſcene, no tear fell from my eyes; no ſigh eſcaped my heart. My ſenſes ſeemed locked up in the greatneſs of my calamity; and poſſeſſed of a ſteady reſolution to die, I uttered no complaint, nor ſhed any outward ſymptom of the horror and conſternation of my ſoul. After having lain ſome time in the manner I have deſcribed, I loſt all recollection, and felt my miſery no longer.

The reſt of my melancholy ſtory is hardly worth your attention. The body of

of Synnelet being carried to the town, and his wounds examined, it was found he was not only alive, but that none of his wounds were mortal. He told his uncle ingenuouſly what had happened, and had generoſity enough to do juſtice to my conduct. An enquiry was immediately made for me; but I was gone. It was too late to ſearch for me out of the town that night; and for two days their endeavours to find me did not ſucceed: but on the evening of the third I was diſcovered on the grave of Manon; ſenſeleſs, almoſt without cloaths, and covered with blood from my wound: and thoſe who found me imagined from my appearance that I had been robbed and murdered. They carried me as well as they could towards the town; and the motion brought me to myſelf. The ſighs and groans I uttered on finding

ing myſelf ſtill among the living, firſt informed them I might be reſtored by their aſſiſtance; in giving me which they ſucceeded but too well. But notwithſtanding my deplorable condition, I was ſent to priſon, and cloſely confined in a dungeon; for when Manon could no where be found, they believed I had killed her in a tranſport of jealous rage.

As ſoon as I was able, I recounted ſimply and naturally all that I remembered to have happened; and truth had its effect. Synnelet, unhappy as the event had made him, was generous enough to intereſt himſelf for me, and obtained my releaſe: but I was ſo weak, that when they took me from my dungeon I was carried to bed, where I lay for three months, ſometimes ſenſible, but oftener in an happy forgetfulneſs of all my ſorrows.

When

When I poſſeſſed my recollection, life grew more and more inſupportable to me. I called perpetually on death, as the only end of my miſery; and when I had the power to refuſe, I refuſed all ſuccour. But Heaven having ſo ſeverely puniſhed me, now ſuffered me to profit from its chaſtiſement. The remembrance of what I had been, and what I ought to be, returned; and as my youth and a very good conſtitution in ſpite of my affliction, by degrees ſurmounted my diſeaſe, reaſon returned with returning health. I entered again on the duties of my employment, waiting 'till a veſſel ſhould arrive from France, which is expected there only once a year. I reſolved to return to my native country, and by my future conduct endeavour to repair the errors of my former life. For my poor

Manon I could now do no more: during my illneſs Synnelet had taken care to have her remains removed to the town, and interred in the church with every mark of reſpect.

About ſix weeks after I left my bed, I was walking alone on the beach, and diſcovered a ſail, which I found to be a ſmall veſſel come to trade at New Orleans. I ſtood to ſee the debarkation, and with extreme ſurpriſe ſaw Tiberge among thoſe who came on ſhore. This faithful friend knew me afar off; tho' grief and illneſs had very much altered my appearance. He embraced me, with tears, and told me the only motive of his voyage was to try to engage me to return to France. As ſoon as he received my letter, he ſet out himſelf to bring me the aſſiſtance I

deſired;

deſired; and was moſt ſenſibly hurt on arriving at Havre to find I was ſailed. He would inſtantly have followed me, but could find no ſhip likely to ſail to New Orleans for many months; therefore after many delays he embarked at St. Maloes in a veſſel bound to Martinique, from whence he thought he might get a paſſage to me; but the Malouin ſhip was taken on her paſſage by a Spaniſh pirate, and carried to one of their iſlands, from whence with great difficulty he eſcaped, and after various accidents got on board the little ſloop, which now ſo happily landed him at New Orleans.

To ſuch friendſhip, who could be inſenſible. I carried him to my cottage, of which I deſired him to conſider himſelf maſter while we ſtaid. I informed

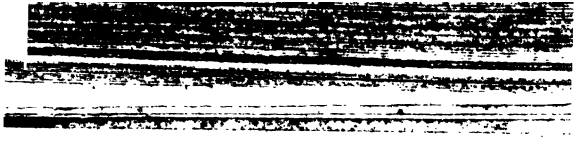
him of all that had happened ſince we quitted France; and he heard me with extreme joy declare that the rudiments of virtue I derived from him, were now likely to produce permanent effects: he aſſured me that ſuch a hope repaid him for all the fatigue he had undergone.

We waited two months before a ſhip from France arrived at New Orleans, in which we embarked, and landed at Havre a fortnight ſince; when I immediately wrote to my family; but by the anſwer I have received from my brother, I learn the mournful news of my father's death, and I ſhudder to enquire whether it has not been haſtened, if not occaſioned by my ill conduct.

The wind being favourable for Calais, I went on board a coaſting veſſel, and arrived

arrived here laſt night; and I am now going to the houſe of a relation, ſix leagues from hence, where my brother informs me he will wait my arrival.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 84, line 3, for *false* read *fatal*—p 103, l. 19. for *grave* read *grève*. N. B. The Grêve is the place of public execution at Paris.